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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to help educators and other interested individuals find their way through the plethora of reform reports published in the early 1980s. The early historical context of the reports is set out through a discussion of secondary education and proposals for reform since the 19th century. This is followed by a discussion of the 1983 reports that addresses their focus on the high school, their differences with the reform reports of the 1970s, and their common themes. These themes are identified as the meaning of excellence and the relationship of excellence to equity; the need to redefine and narrow the schools' goals and objectives; strengthening the curriculum; tracking; vocational education and the high school; the place of technology, particularly computers, in the schools; the use of time; the need to improve teachers and teaching; the importance of school principal leadership; business-school partnerships; and federal, state, and local responsibilities. Finally, an analysis of the reports is offered in terms of their treatment of the crisis in education today; the context of schooling; the poor, minorities, and urban schools; excellence, equity, and standards; reforming the schools, teaching, and learning; school climate and environment; better teachers and better teaching; the intrinsic value of education; and the school and non-educative settings. Throughout this analysis and the preceding discussion, comparisons are made with earlier reform reports. (CMG)

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A Critical Review of the National Reports

By
A. Harry Passow

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A Critical Review of the National Reports

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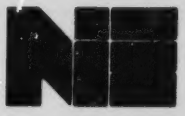

Foreword

I am grateful to Erwin Flaxman, Director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, for inviting me to prepare this manuscript. I have had an interest in school reform for more than thirty years, beginning, I think, when I attended the All-College Lectures at Teachers College, Columbia University, as a student to hear the debates. When James B. Conant conducted his Study of the American High School along with several colleagues, I conferred with Dr. Conant and his staff.

In 1976, I was honored to be selected to deliver the Julius and Rosa Sachs Memorial Lectures on secondary education. The title of my Sachs lectures was *Secondary Education Reform: Retrospect and Prospect.* In preparing this manuscript, I have used pages 9-37 of that publication for pages 7-27 of this one. In addition, I have drawn pages 23-26 of this manuscript from an article entitled "The Future of the High School" which appeared in the September, 1977, *Teachers College Record.* In setting out the historical context of reform reports, I had stated the case as well as I could in those two documents and so have included those pages here.

The purpose of this book and a companion volume is to help educators and other individuals find their way through the maze of the reform reports of the 1980s as they come to grips with reform in their own schools or school systems. The Appendix (companion volume), specifically reviewing current reports on the secondary schools, is entitled *A Review of the Major Current Reports on Secondary Education.* Change takes place on many different levels and the change agents differ from setting to setting. Educators can neither accept all of the diagnoses and recommendations made by the various reports lock, stock, and barrel, or ignore them. They need to be viewed critically and intelligently. I hope this publication is helpful in that respect.

—A. Harry Passow
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I. Once Again, Reforming Education

The year 1983 will undoubtedly be remembered as "The Year of the Educational Reform Reports." Mortimer Adler's educational manifesto, *The Paideia Proposal*, had been published in 1982 and opened with the assertion that: "The long-needed educational reform for which this country is at least ready will be a turning point toward that new era [in our national life]" (Adler, 1982, p. 3). However, it was the report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education entitled, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* which was the first of a flood of reports and which set the tone for urgency in drastic educational reform.

Created by Secretary of Education T. H. Bell to define the ills afflicting education and to propose solutions for these problems, the Commission concluded that the very future of the nation was threatened by the erosion of its educational foundations. Noting that the nation's "once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throught the world," the Commission asserted that its concern went beyond these matters and included "the intellectual, moral, and spiritual strengths of our people which knit together the very fabric of our society" (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, pp. 5, 7). In rhetoric clearly designed to catch the nation's attention, the report described the condition of education in alarming terms:

> If an unfriendly power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge. Moreover, we have dismantled essential support systems which helped make those gains possible. We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking unilateral educational disarmament (p. 5).

Presented to President Ronald Reagan at a press conference on April 26, 1983, *A Nation at Risk* immediately became a media event setting off discussions and debates among political leaders, educators, scholars, lay leaders, and other groups, quickly moving education to a high priority level which it had not enjoyed since the launching of Sputnik in October, 1957. As with the Sputnik effects, once again the nation's schools and particularly its secondary schools were viewed as crucial to the nation's security and its commerce.

A flood of other reports followed in the months thereafter, with such titles as *Action for Excellence; Academic Preparation for College; High*

School, A Place Called School; Meeting the Need for Quality; Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School; An Education of Value; Improvement of Secondary Education through Research; Educating Americans for the 21st Century; and *Education, Character and American Schools.* At the Wingspread Conference on Studies of the American High School which was held in Racine, Wisconsin, November 4-6, 1982, a total of 29 projects were represented and included in the conference compilation of study project descriptions. These projects varied in purpose, design, time frame, expectations, and outcomes. Al of them, however, were studying some aspect or aspects of the afflictions and shortcomings of American education, particularly those of the nation's high schools. John I. Goodlad's Study of Schooling extended over a decade and Herbert J. Klausmeier's Wisconsin Program for Renewal and Improvement of Secondary Education was a five-year project. Other groups issued reports in a matter of months. Some study projects involved extensive data collection from school sites while others relied on discussions of specially prepared position papers on which to base conclusions concerning educationl malaise and to propose recommendations for dealing with these problems.

The common element in all of the reports was the clear and firm conclusion that there was a serious crisis in American eduction which, if left unattended, would result in the nation being vulnerable to its commercial, industrial, and even military competitors. As former United States Commissioner of Education Harold Howe II observed, "Frustration over the diminishing capacity of the U.S. to compete in worldwide markets has awakened new interest in the old idea that the quality of human resources is a key element in the efficiency of the nation's economy" (Howe, 1983, p. 167). Relating the deterioration of the nation's schools to national security as well as to the national economy aroused memories of the outpouring of condemnations of the schools following the launching of Sputnik in October, 1957, when the "sorry state of teaching of mathematics and science" in the nation's high schools was blamed for the Russians' victory in the race to orbit the earth in outer space. True, the Sputnik-initiated criticisms had been preceded in the early 1950s with calls for abandoning "life adjustment education" and other forms of progressive education and for returning to the basic subjects and academic disciplines. The proposals in current reports aimed at improving teaching and learning in mathematics and science, raising the requirements in these subject areas, and recruiting and educating better science and mathematics teachers, are reminiscent of the Sputnik era and the National Defense Education Act of 1958 which followed.

Just a decade ago, the nation's educators and citizenry were discussing some eight or ten (depending on which were included) reports which set forth the shortcomings of high schools, examined the nature and causes of the problems of educating and socializing youth, and proposed policy and programs changes which, had they been implemented fully, would have affected all of the institutions and agencies serving youth as well as

society generally. While some of the criticisms of the high school in the reports of the 1970s are similar to those found in the current crop of reports, there seemed to have been a different tone in the earlier reports. The 1970s reports seemed to focus more on the lack of relevance and humaneness of the high schools rather than on the schools as units in industrial production and national security. The reports of the 1970s saw a nation at risk because of what was happening to the personal development of students and to society in general. The National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education (Brown, 1973), established by the Kettering Foundation shared the feeling of several other reports at that time in seeing as one of the sources of the problems of the high schools "society's insistence on sudden and traumatic changes in their missions." As that commission observed:

> The American comprehensive high school today must be viewed as an establishment striving to meet the complex demands of society in the throes of social change, at a time when the school system has become too large an institution and is literally overrun with a mix of young people from inconsistent social backgrounds. This is a difficult circumstance. The pressure of these forces exhausts the strength of the high school as an organized institution (p. 10).

Similarly, the National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education (Martin, 1974), established by the United States Office of Education, concluded that the high school was still failing to respond adequately to the needs of individual students. This panel noted an "increased public awareness that the high school, as an institution, is not merely inappropriate for a growing number of students. It is increasingly ill-matched to many, possibly a growing majority, of its present adolescent population who are either too old or too mature to live under the routine controls and strictures of a large high school without serious disturbances to them and to the school" (pp. 36-37).

Several reports in the 1970s were concerned that the almost complete absorption of "teenage adults" into the high school had resulted in a decoupling of generations and segregation and isolation of youth—a segregation which "facilitates the specialization of activities in society, but . . . inhibits the experiences of youth in incidental activities that form everyday life, and thus the learning that accompanies those activities" (Coleman, 1974, p. xx).

B. Othanel Smith and Donald E. Orlosky (1975), as with other critics and reformers of the time, were more concerned with this matter of age segregation than with a common curriculum or an increase in the study of mathematics and science. They viewed the situation in which youth are denied association with adults—their perception of the high school in the 1970s—as

> a situation of which [society] is scarcely aware, and yet one that rivals in the gravity of its ultimate consequences the discrimination against minorities and the hazards of environmental disruption. It is the breakdown of the processes of socialization resulting in an increasing dissipation of the productive potential of youth and their moral fiber. The youth of all social classes, of the cultural majority no less than the minorities, are being squandered in idle dissipation, assigned to martyrdom by isolation and monotony (p. iii).

In their publication entitled *High School,* Ronald Gross and Paul Osterman (1971) noted that by 1970 serious student disruptions had occurred in more than two-thirds of all urban and suburban schools and in more than half the rural schools. They observed that the three issues most cited and the basis for major complaints were irrelevance, racism, and authoritarianism. The issue of irrelevance had to do with curriculum and Gross and Osterman concluded:

> The ideas . . . that study involves devoting oneself to boring or uninteresting subjects of the teacher's choosing, that good grades equal good education, and that studying hard to pass an exam is a worthwhile expenditure of energy and spirit—all are typical of the ideas which inform most high-school curricula. Equally outdated is the idea that there is a given body of knowledge all students should learn. The world has changed too much—there are too many disciplines to make an arbitrary judgment about which are important . . . . Students are insisting that the curricula grow out of their own interests and concerns, that they be permitted to choose which path into learning to take (p. 13).

In contrast to the Gross and Osterman description of curricular irrelevance, current reports are calling for high school graduates to complete a specific minimum number of units which would constitute a common curriculum for all; for higher standards in all subject areas; for the reduction or elimination of electives, doing away with a "smorgasbord curriculum;" for improved selection and preparation of teachers who will be capable of teaching the required curriculum; for competency testing of both students and teachers; for more homework; for longer school days and longer school years; and for a variety of other curricular, personnel, and organizational changes all of which are aimed at achieving new standards of excellence, defined in academic terms for the most part. In the 1970s, the schools were at fault because they did not provide curricula which grew out of student interests, needs, and concerns. In the 1980s, the schools were at fault because they did not have stiff enough requirements, were mediocre

or worse in the quality of teachers and teaching, were not educating workers adequately so that the nation would be unable to compete in world markets, and were doing an especially poor job in teaching mathematics, science, and the new computer technology.

After the national distress which followed the launching of Sputnik, there were what have been described as "massive efforts" in curriculum reform in mathematics, science, and foreign languages which eventually spread to almost all subject areas. The National Defense Education Act focused initially on reeducation of teachers at both the pre-service and in-service levels. The assumption was that teachers could be trained to implement the new curricula being developed through various committees, research and development centers, and subject matter groups. Currently, a variety of recommendations aim at raising standards for admission to teacher preparation programs, at increasing salaries so that teaching becomes more respected and rewarding, at developing career ladders, and at increasing the liberal arts component of preparation while decreasing or eliminating the professional education component. Merit pay figures in some of the reports as a means of upgrading teaching. The difference between the post-Sputnik efforts and the current reform reports is that in the 1960s the focus was on curriculum development and on teacher reeducation on the assumption that the teacher corps was basically capable of redevelopment. The current reports seem basically skeptical as to whether teachers, coming as they do from the lowest scholastic aptitude level, are really capable of teaching to higher standards. Therefore, the recommendations emphasize recruiting at higher levels, employing non-certificated persons, and making teaching more attractive so that more outstanding individuals are attracted to the profession.

The year 1983 witnessed another unusual phenomenon. One observer estimated that there were more than 140 state committees, commissions, panels and other groups studying educational reform, almost three per state. Regular news roundup indicated that in all 50 states and the District of Columbia efforts were underway for legislation or state department regulation to mandate reform. These ranged from an $800 million reform bill passed by the California state legislature which set higher graduation requirements, lengthened the school day and extended the school year by five days, raised the salaries of beginning teachers and provided bonuses for master teachers, eliminated lifetime credentials for teachers, and provided mini-grants for teachers with innovative curriculum ideas. In contrast, other states had only set up area meetings aimed at informing citizens of the Commission on Excellence in Education's recommendations and begun to develop goals for improvement. While states had taken actions during the post-Sputnik era, it was primarily the leadership of the federal government which stimulated the "era of curricular reform" at that time. Never before had states, which have basic responsibility for providing public education to their citizenry, been so actively involved in considering and mandating reforms in schools. Some states, such as California, New York, and Ohio, had initiated reform efforts prior to the

release of various reports.

Other groups were also involved in educational reform. For instance, at a November, 1983, meeting of the Association of American Publishers, a number of speakers including the chief school officers of California and New York urged the textbook publishers to fulfill their roles in helping schools raise the standards in their classrooms by improving the quality of their textbooks, making them more difficult. All of the speakers were in agreement on the importance of textbooks and the need for raising the quality of text materials. However, there seemed to be some caution on the part of publishers who were concerned about a possible conflict between tightened standards and more difficult texts and the general marketability of their products.

Certainly the recommendations of the commissions, committees, and panels of the 1970s did not result in the same kinds of extensive and intensive reform efforts as appears to be underway throughout the nation on many different levels and by different agencies and institutions in the 1980s. Even the frenetic efforts which followed the launching of Sputnik were of a different order. Nor was the term "excellence" so pervasive in the 1970s. John Gardner had chaired the panel on education for the 1958 Rockefeller Brothers Fund study, *The Pursuit of Excellence*, and had later raised the question as to whether we could be excellent and equal in his book, *Excellence* (1961). The term "excellence" figured prominently in the post-Sputnik debates, was almost absent in the 1970 discussions, and reappeared repeatedly in the reports and discussions of the 1980s.

In the evolution of secondary education in America, for almost a century there have been criticisms and proposals for reform. Educators and lay persons alike have always believed that our schools could be better and different from what they were and are. No matter how intense the criticisms, schools have always been viewed as making a significant contribution to the transition of children and youth to adulthood. The tension between what the schools do and what educators and lay persons think they can and should do is reflected in the rhetoric and the substance of reports over the past nine decades. In 1983, once again as has been occurring almost continuously since 1893, America is being pressed to reform education. And once again, the prime focus is on the high school, that institution which John Gardner described as a "peculiarly American phenomenon" responsible "for providing good and appropriate education, both academic and vocational, for all young people within a democratic environment which the American people believe serves the principles they cherish" (Gardner, 1959, p. x). Gardner's idealized view of the American comprehensive high school came at a time when the secondary school was the focus of considerable controversy following the launching of Sputnik in October, 1957. For many years, educators and lay persons alike had pointed with pride to the fact that no other nation provided free full-time schooling for 90 percent of its youth population, a substantial portion of whom went on to some form of tertiary education. Yet even as the holding power of the high school rose steadily, questions were constantly being raised as to whether

the schools were indeed providing "good and appropriate education." These questions have been ongoing ones with committees and commissions inquiring regularly with more or less urgency into the purposes, curriculum, and design of schools—especially high schools—for some ninety years. A look at some of these reports and events is helpful in putting the present crop of reports into perspective.

II. Secondary Education Reform in Retrospect

For most educational historians, the 1890s are viewed as a watershed, marking the emergence of the high school as an accepted extension of the common school. The *Report of the Committee on Secondary School Studies*, better known as the Committee of Ten (1893), was widely discussed and hotly debated by school and college people for many years—primarily by subject matter teachers and admissions officers who felt they had been slighted somehow by the recommendations for electives (modern academic subjects were to be as acceptable for college admission as the classics) and for an "equality" of subjects. Although the Committee was appointed to study the demands for more uniformity in college admissions, the bulk of the report consists of the recommendations of bodies of experts in nine subject areas detailing curriculum. The Committee proposed four alternative programs—classical, Latin-scientific, modern languages, and English. The subject experts spelled out in great detail what was to be taught, when to begin, how often, and for how long. For example, the English report recommended "the reading of certain masterpieces of English literature, not fewer in number than those at present assigned by the Commission of New England Colleges, should be required" (p. 95).

The Committee declared flatly that the preparation of a small percentage of graduates for college was not the principal purpose of the public high schools. Rather,

> Their main function is to prepare for the duties of life that small proportion of all children in the country—a proportion small in number, but very important to the welfare of the nation—who show themselves able to profit by an education prolonged to the eighteenth year, and whose parents are able to support them while they remain so long at school (pp. 52-53).

Thus, the Committee declared that the secondary school program must be designed primarily for students whose education was to be terminal with the high school, but argued that preparation for college was really the best preparation for life: "every subject which is taught at all in a

secondary school should be taught in the same way and to the same extent to every pupil so long as he pursues it, no matter what the probable destination to the pupil may be, or at what point his education is to cease" (p. 17). The Committee also held that the chief purpose of education was to train the mind. Throughout the report there are statements that a subject is "an instrument for training the mind to habits of intellectual consciousness, patience, discrimination, accuracy, and thoroughness—in a word, to habits of clear and sound thinking." Each of the committees of experts urged that some elements of their subjects—perspective views or broad surveys—should be taught earlier and offered in the elementary schools so that the high schools could take the same subjects up in more detail. The report deplored the existence of short information courses, which touched on a subject superficially, and proposed coherent courses of two or more years. The Committee also emphasized the need for better prepared teachers.

There is some question about how influential the Committee of Ten report really was, the differences stemming from the criteria of influence being applied. Lawrence A. Cremin (1961) saw the acceptance given the report as overwhelming with most schools having moved into line behind the proposals within a decade after publication. Yet, he points out, "in this very same period, political, economic, and social changes of the first magnitude were beginning to occasion new demands on the school—demands destined to alter the outlook of 1893" (p. 299).

In the next two decades or so, the National Education Association appointed six other national committees. The Committee on College-Entrance Requirements (1899) declared the principle of election but found unlimited election inadvisable. The committee proposed a set of constants (four years of foreign languages, two of mathematics, two of English, one of history, and one of science) to be taken by all students with the remaining six units to be filled out by electives. That committee also urged a "unified six-year high school course of study beginning with the seventh grade." The Committee of Nine on the Articulation of High School and College (1911) was charged with urging the colleges to drop the entrance requirements of two foreign languages and accept instead all subjects which were "well taught in the high school." The Committee of Nine went beyond its charge and discussed the purposes of the high school as including good citizenship, vocational education, and attention to the needs of students who were not college bound. Thus, some aspects of the Committee of Nine's report were harbingers of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education's report in 1918. As for the NEA committees, Thomas H. Briggs (1951) dismissed them as having "made little contribution to the solution of the problem of what the secondary school should attempt to do and what means it should use." He urged that criticism of these committees not be too severe "for they reported on their assignments, which evidenced that the profession was more interested in the mechanics of education than in education itself" (p. 408).

One particularly important report which emerged in 1909 from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching established what came to be known as the *Carnegie unit*. The Carnegie or *standard unit* represented an effort to regularize high school "credits" on the basis of classroom hours and to enable calculation of college entrance requirements quantitatively. It was assumed "that a satisfactory year's work in any major subject cannot be accomplished in less than 120 sixty-minute hours, or their equivalent." As Edward A. Krug (1964) put it, "Thus was the unit sent forth on its long and controversial mission in the annals of American schooling" (p. 161). For the next half century, the Carnegie unit did indeed exercise considerable influence on standardizing curriculum in secondary schools.

At the turn of the century, incidentally, almost three-fifths of the high school population was female. Julius Sachs, writing on "Coeducation in the United States" declared that it was "'little short of monstrous' that boys in high school received 'almost all of their intellectual and moral impulse from female teachers,'" (Krug, 1964, pp. 171-2) and this, in Sachs' view, was a major reason for boys dropping out of school.

Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education, 1918

The Commission of the Reorganization of Secondary Education was appointed in 1913 but did not issue its report, the *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education,* until 1918. This commission, according to Briggs, *did* concern itself with education. Cremin (1961) has pointed out that:

> An expanding industrialism, a changing immigration, and a vigorous democracy exerted fundamental new demands on American schools between 1893 and 1918. Equally important in the evolving pedagogy of the era, however, were changes in the conception of the school itself—of its relationship to society and to the individuals who attend it (p. 301).

The important word in the Commission's title was *reorganization.* Secondary education, the report argued, "should be determined by the needs of the society to be served, the character of the individuals to be educated, and the knowledge of educational theory and practice available" (p. 1). The Commission detailed changes in society (as citizen, as worker, and as independent personality, the individual required a higher degree of intelligence and efficiency), in the secondary school population (aside from the numerical increase with the high school population having doubled each year since 1890, the students differed in "widely varying capacities, aptitudes, social heredity, and destinies in life"), and in educational theory and practice (knowledge about individual differences in capacities and aptitudes, reexamination of the subjects and methodologies as related to "general discipline," and concern with the application of knowledge). The evidence was strong, the Commission asserted, that a comprehensive reorganization of secondary education was imperative.

All education in the United States, the Commission declared, should be guided by a clear conception of the meaning of democracy: "Education in a democracy, both within and without the school, should develop in each individual the knowledge, interests, ideals, habits, and powers whereby he will find his place and use that place to shape both himself and society toward ever nobler ends" (p. 20). The main objectives of secondary education, determined by an analysis of the individual as he functions normally in a variety of reference groups, were: health, command of fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure, and ethical character. These objectives applied not only to secondary education, but to elementary and higher education as well.

Thus, the Commission stressed the preparation of students for social responsibility in a democratic society. R. Freeman Butts (1975-76) has pointed out that the report shifted:

> the emphasis in schooling away from preoccupation with the academic and intellectual disciplines and [broadened] the social role of education almost beyond recognition. The "constants" were now to be thought of in terms of the common social needs and activities required of all individuals rather than the subject matter to be mastered; the variations and electives appropriate to differing individuals could be served in connection with vocation and leisure (pp. 6-7).

The Commission had appointed a series of subject-matter committees to flesh out from their respective fields what should be taught. The report asserted that every subject now taught in the high school was in need of extensive reorganization so that it might contribute more effectively to the seven objectives—"the place of that subject in secondary education should depend upon the value of such contribution." Of course, the Commission did not demand that every subject contribute to all seven objectives to the same degree.

Secondary education had to fill two functions: one of specialization "whereby individuals may become effective in the various vocations and other fields of human endeavor," and the other of unification, the attainment "of those common ideas, common ideals, and common modes of thought, feeling, and action that make for cooperation, social cohesion, and social solidarity." Specialization called for a wide range of subjects, opportunities for exploration and guidance, adaptation of content and method, flexibility of organization and administration, and differentiated curricula. Unification called for direct studies (especially in the social studies and English), organization, and administration of the school to provide for social mingling and student participation in common activities which were to provide for a large measure of responsibility. The report urged that all normal students be encouraged to stay in high school until

age eighteen—on a full-time basis if possible or part-time if not. The Commission declared that "the comprehensive (sometimes called composite or cosmopolitan) high school, embracing all curriculums in one unified organization, should remain the standard type of secondary school in the United States" (p. 16).

In concluding its report, the Commission called attention to the seventeen additional reports in which the principles were supposedly applied to the various aspects of secondary education. Again, Briggs observed that these subject matter reports almost entirely failed in their assignments: "Either they did not comprehend the definitions and recommendations of the commission or they did not have the time and the ingenuity to propose exemplification" (p. 409).

Contrasting the Report of the Committee of Ten with that of the Commission on Reorganization of Secondary Education, Cremin (1956) observed:

> Formerly, when the content and purpose of secondary education had been fairly well defined, equal opportunity meant the right of all who might profit from secondary education as so defined to enjoy its benefits. Now, the "given" of the equation was no longer the school with its content and purposes but the children with their backgrounds and needs. Equal opportunity now meant simply the right of all who came to be offered something of value, and it was the school's obligation to offer it. The magnitude of this shift cannot be overestimated; it was truly Copernican in character (pp. 17-18).

In secondary school reform, the report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education is perceived as having begun a new era, for what the Commission proposed was a different conception of what the secondary school was and what it should be doing.

Reports of the 1930s

Fourteen years later, with the nation well into the Great Depression with its consequent economic, social, and political upheavals, the Department of Secondary School Principals appointed a Committee on the Reorientation of Secondary Education under the chairmanship of Thomas H. Briggs. The Committee was charged with presenting a clearcut statement of the functions and purposes of secondary education. The Committee divided its task and issued two reports, one dealing with *Issues of Secondary Education* (1936) and the other, *Functions of Secondary Education* (1937). Briggs saw his committee as being the first professional group which considered the unanswered questions in the philosophy of secondary education and then set out definite functions for secondary education. The Committee observed that the high schools exhibited almost all of the fundamental defects which characterize any enterprise which has been permitted to grow practically fortuitously. More specifically, the

Committee asserted that secondary education "now, as in the past, is guided as a whole, by no clearly formulated plan; it rests on no carefully conceived and fully envisaged educational philosophy; it has achieved no consistent standards by which to evaluate its own endeavors" (p. 19). What was needed was an intelligent, comprehensive, and long-sighted plan, something more than the *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*.

Each of ten issues was stated and the arguments pro and con each alternative were presented. The Committee then left their resolution to the public, although its own position was made clear with respect to each of the issues. The issues were of this order:

> 2. Shall secondary education seek to retain all pupils in school as long as they wish to remain, or shall it transfer them to other agencies when in the judgment of the school authorities, these agencies promise to serve better the pupils' immediate and probable future needs?
> 3. Shall secondary education provide a common curriculum for all, or differentiated offerings?
> 4. Shall secondary education include vocational training, or shall it be restricted to general education?
> 8. Shall secondary education present merely organized knowledge, or shall it also assume responsibility for attitudes and ideas? (pp. 20-21).

The second report, *Functions of Secondary Education*, detailed each of the ten functions, together with a discussion. These functions served as the basis for several later reports of the National Education Association including its Educational Policies Commission's *Education for ALL American Youth*.

The Progressive Education Association established its Commission on the Relation of School and College in 1933 to improve coordination of school and college work and to enable secondary schools to undertake major program revisions. The Commission initiated what came to be called the "Eight-Year Study" in 1932, with 30 high schools (one withdrew later) and 300 colleges putting aside the normal subject and unit requirements for admission to college. The Eight-Year Study represented perhaps the most comprehensive and potentially significant curriculum study ever undertaken. Careful evaluation procedures were devised to measure the success in college of graduates from the experimental schools. The contribution to the field of evaluation alone, in the eyes of some educators, made the study worth undertaking, for the committees specified the objectives in terms of behaviors and then devised techniques and procedures for gathering data on these behaviors. The evaluation compared 1,475 matched pairs of students, one each from a traditional school and an experimental school, with respect to a variety of behaviors in college. Not

only did the experimental school students do better than those who came from more traditional programs, but those who came from the more experimental schools showed even greater differences. Findings of the study which terminated in 1941 were presented in a series of five volumes which described the overall study, the curricular modifications undertaken by the schools, the evaluation procedures, the success of the high school graduates in college, and the story of one school's experience as seen by its students (Aikin, 1942).

There has been much speculation as to why the Eight-Year Study did not have the impact which might have been expected from an experiment of this design and magnitude and with such outcomes as emerged. One possibility is that the results were published in 1942 just as the United States had entered World War II and, when the war was over, conditions had so altered as to cause the profession and the public to fail to appreciate the results. In any event, when Frederick L. Redefer (1952) visited each of the 30 schools eight years later, he found that little remained of the experimental programs.

Two major surveys were conducted during the 1930s: the National Survey of Secondary Education (1932) and a study of the conditions and attitudes of 16- to 24-year-olds in Maryland by the American Council on Education's American Youth Commission. In 1951, Briggs characterized these as "the two great tragedies in modern history of secondary education." As he put it, "the National Survey labored under the obsession, highly popular two decades ago, that the collection of data, presented in tables and graphs with medians, modes, and probable errors calculated with unnecessary niceness, was of paramount importance." The 28 volumes of the National Survey now repose, Briggs observed, "in impotence on library shelves" (p. 414).

Although Briggs viewed the American Youth Commission as a tragedy because of its statistical nature, the study was tragic in a very different sense. The report, *Youth Tell Their Story* (1938), presented a picture of the conditions and attitudes of some 13,528 Maryland youth who perceived that the schools and the economic structure had failed to meet their needs. There was a pervasive dissatisfaction with schooling in general and an indication that technical training and vocational guidance were needed. The study showed that the schools had failed to serve as vehicles for social mobility—socioeconomic status, race, and sex were the outstanding factors that affected the amount of schooling youth received. Vigorous social action was called for in the areas of education, employment, and recreation, with the Commission urging "the development of a national program of constructive and profitable activity for its youth."

In 1938, the results of the Regents of the University of the State of New York's *Inquiry into the Character and Cost of Public Education* were published in a general report accompanied by 10 supporting volumes. The charge of the Regents was for a critical study for the entire educational enterprise of the state, its outcomes, methods, and costs and for the formulation of long-range policies and programs for dealing with the problems

and issues indentified. The inquiry concluded that the educational system had "not yet adjusted its program to carry the new load by the coming into the schools, particularly the secondary schools, of all the children of all the people, with their many new and different needs" and that the programs had "not been redesigned to fit [students] for the new and changing work opportunities which they must face in modern economic life" (p. 5). If the *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education's* main objectives had been accepted, the schools of New York State had simply not "been replanned to meet the new conditions of modern life and new ways of living, in which the family, the church, and early work now exercise less influence, and in which increasing leisure in later life calls for, and makes possible, a rich and growing inner life." In *Education for American Life* and in several supporting volumes, the Regents' inquiry spelled out a secondary school program which would encompass grades seven through twelve; would make general education the central objective of the program by stressing through grade twelve the study of general science, human relations, community life, world history, general mathematics, and the arts; would "make understanding and enthusiasm for the democratic system part of character education;" and would include vocational education which emphasized broad vocational training rather than the development of specialized skills as part of the program of every comprehensive high school Presumably the study became the basis for redesigning education in New York State and, by virtue of being commercially published, received wide distribution across the country.

Reports of the 1940s

Toward the end of World War II, the NEA's Educational Policies Commission published a volume entitled *Education for ALL American Youth* (1944) which stemed "from a firm conviction on the part of the . . . Commission that the extension, adaptation, and improvement of secondary education is essential both to the security of our American institutions and to the economic well-being of our people." The Commission decided "to dig beneath statements of general principles and to suggest in some detail how approved principles can be carried out in practice" (p. vi). Two secondary school programs, one for American City and other for Farmville, were indeed described with the schools encompassing grades seven through fourteen. In an accompanying publication, *Planning for American Youth*, the Department of Secondary School Principals summarized and popularized the EPC volume and added a list of ten "Imperative Educational Needs of Youth." The curriculum of American City's schools included four divisions of learning, designated as common learnings, vocational preparation, individual interests, and health and physical education, aimed at providing a balanced program to help students grow in the areas described in the *Cardinal Principles. Education for ALL American Youth* was revised and reissued in 1952 with minor changes to remove the anachronisms which had emerged since the war's end. Communities could have schools as good as American City's and Farmville's

if they would but demand them and see that they were brought into existence. Hollis L. Caswell (1946) thought it "improbable that national or regional committee reports—even such an admirable report as *Education for ALL American Youth*—can be the primary source of actual change." Change, he asserted, "rests with the individual school—with a principal and a group of teachers working with the problems of a given community and its youth—to do the job" (p. 258).

Life-Adjustment Education Movement

Concern with the inadequacy of vocational education had been voiced continuously since the turn of the century and passage of the Smith-Hughes Law in 1917, with its provisions for federal aid in home economics, agriculture, trade and industrial subjects in the high schools; the act did little to resolve the issues. The George-Dean Act of 1937 added provisions for distributive education, but the arguments concerning a separate vocational education system vis-à-vis vocational education in the comprehensive school accelerated. In January 1944, the Vocational Division of the USOE undertook a study of "Vocational Education in the Years Ahead." Some sixteen months later, a conference was convened to discuss the study. The meeting is remembered not for its discussion of vocational education in the postwar period, but for the beginnings of the life-adjustment education movement. Asked to summarize the conference, Charles A. Prosser (who had served earlier as lobbyist for the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education) introduced what has since come to be known as the "Prosser Resolution." That resolution expressed the belief that, with the aid of the conference report, the vocational schools would be better able to prepare 20 percent of secondary school youth to enter desired skilled occupations, and that high schools would continue to prepare another 20 percent for college entrance. It was the middle 60 percent which were not "receiving the life-adjustment training they need and to which they are entitled as American citizens," and they were not likely to "unless and until the administrators of public education with the assistance of the vocational leaders formulate a similar program for this group" (Jones & Gregory, 1948, p. 15). The call was for regional conferences to consider the reforms needed in curriculum, guidance provisions, and opportunities for work experience, and the life-adjustment education movement was launched. Cremin (1961) has commented: "Of all the postwar refinements of progressive education . . . none has achieved the publicity, or indeed the notoriety, of the so-called life-adjustment movement" (p. 335). The movement soon came under sharp attack and even ridicule and the term "life adjustment" faded away, although the basic problems which the Prosser Resolution had tried to address clearly remained to be solved.

Two commissions on Life Adjustment Education for Youth were appointed for three-year terms each, but no new commission was appointed in 1954 due, to a large extent, to the attacks made on life-adjustment education and on progressive education generally. Arthur Bestor (1953) was in the vanguard of critics of progressive education and

life-adjustment education which he described as being at the very root of America's educational ills. In his *Restoration of Learning*, he called for reform by returning to the basic academic disciplines, by focusing education on systematic intellectual training, and by returning teacher training to the academic scholars (cutting it loose from the "interlocking directorate" of school administrators, education professors, and state department bureaucrats).

Effects of Sputnik

The launching o Russia's Sputnik in October, 1957, opened the floodgates of criticism of America's educational system, especially the high schools where the "watering down" of the curriculum was perceived as a central cause for America's runner-up status in the space race. For example, Admiral Hyman Rickover became one of the most vocal spokesmen not only for abolishing all signs of progressive and life-adjustment education, but for questioning the very existence of the comprehensive high school as the prototype institution for serving America's needs. Even before Sputnik, in February, 1957, James B. Conant was invited by the Carnegie Corporation of New York to undertake a study of the comprehensive high school's ability to provide adequately for youth with a wide range of differences and needs.

Conant's response in his report, *The American High School Today* (1959), was that the comprehensive high school could indeed meet that responsibility and that "no radical alteration in the basic pattern of American education is necessary in order to improve our public high schools" (p. 40). (John Gardner wrote in a foreword to the book: "When a man like James Conant says it *can* be done, the nation must take notice" (p. x). Conant did propose some twenty-one recommendations, some of which were not unlike those of the reports of the Committee of Ten and the Harvard University Committee on the Objectives of General Education in that they specified what subjects should be studied and for how long. Conant's recommendations gave particular attention to the "academically talented" students (the top 15 percent) and to the "highly gifted" (the top 3 percent) since Sputnik had triggered questions about the comprehensive high school's capability for meeting America's needs for trained brainpower. In retrospect, aside from hastening the closing or consolidation of small schools and adding to the number of guidance counselors, Conant's report brought little reform to American secondary education. Too many boards of education and school administrators were able to justify their programs as meeting "Conant's standards." Two years later, in a report entitled *Slums and Suburbs*, Conant turned his attention to the particular problems of the inner city high schools and the surrounding suburbs, urging that youth in the former be provided with "marketable skills" while those in the latter be counseled to aspire to other than the most prestigious colleges.

The post-Sputnik period ushered in what has since become known as the "Era of Curriculum Innovation." The National Defense Education Act

of 1958 provided funds for upgrading the teaching of science, mathematics, and foreign languages through content revision, development of instructional materials, and training of teachers. The act also provided for improved guidance and counseling, especially in the high schools. The National Science Foundation increased its support for projects to improve course content in science and mathematics. Various foundations invested heavily in projects to upgrade instruction. The 1960s were marked by projects in practically all subject areas which produced new curriculums, instructional resources, organization, technology, teacher training, and personnel deployment patterns. The report of a conference of scientists, mathematicians, and psychologists at Woods Hole, *The Process of Education*, argued that the "structures of the disciplines" should be the basis for formulating school curriculum, and this publication became the guide for many curriculum committees and commissions (Bruner, 1960).

Social Ferment in the 1960s

How much impact the frenetic activities of the curriculum projects of the 1960s have had on America's high schools is being argued still. Charles Silberman (1970) observed that "the reform movement had produced innumerable changes, and yet the schools themselves are largely unchanged" (p. 50). A Ford Foundation study concluded that its $30 million investment in school innovations had had few lasting or significant results: Most innovations seemed to wither when the charismatic promoter moved elsewhere or external funding was reduced.

In the 1960s the civil rights movement and the so-called "war on poverty" focused attention on the failure of the schools to provide adequately for various minority groups and the children of the poor. It was not that the selective nature of the high school had been ignored before this—George S. Counts published a study entitled, *The Selective Character of Secondary Education* (1922) and there were a number of other studies such as *Elmtown's Youth* (1949), *Middletown* (1929), and *Yankee City* (1941). But a new awareness of social problems and the passage of federal legislation, such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, brought the questions of quality education and provision of equality of educational opportunity to the central attention of professional and community groups alike.

When student dissent and unrest spread to the high schools from the colleges in the late 1960s, cries of "curricular irrelevance" and "inhumane constraints" triggered still another reassessment of the goals, structure, operations, and control mechanisms in the high schools. Proposals for reform ranged from minor tinkering (i.e., provide for a pass/fail option) to deschooling society.

Readiness for Change in the 1970s

When Charles Silberman published *Crisis in the Classroom: The Remaking of American Education* (1970) he aimed at the widest possible audience to bring about reform. In answer to the question of whether American education was a success or failure, Silberman concluded that it

was both: "In almost every area, improvements beyond what anyone thought possible fifty or twenty-five or even ten years ago have produced anger and anxiety rather than satisfaction" (p. 19). Silberman expressed his indignation at the failures of the schools, the "mutilation of spontaneity, of joy in learning, of pleasure in creating, of sense of self," and blamed this situation on mindlessness, "the failure or refusal to think seriously about educational purpose, the reluctance to question established practice" (p. 10). This failure seems in sharp contrast with a continuous refining of purpose, not only by committees at the national level whose reports are discussed here, but by various professional groups (e.g., National Council of Teachers of English, Foreign Language Association, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals) and by noneducational groups (such as the Rockefeller Brothers Fund Panel and the President's Commission on National Goals).

In 1972, former United States Commissioner for Education Sidney Marland saw the high school as a "troubled institution and the most likely arena of educational change for the balance of this decade. While there is dissatisfaction, frustration, and readiness for change throughout all of education, the opportunities for reform are especially timely in high school" (pp. 5-6). Addressing secondary school principals in February, 1975, U.S. Commissioner of Education Terrel H. Bell posed two basic challenges facing secondary education: One was a need for restructuring "to accommodate young people who are more mature, more capable of responsibility, more willing to begin the transition to adulthood than any other recent generation" (1975, p. 1). The second challenge was for high school educators "to get back in touch with the community and its many institutions that can and should contribute to the education of the young."

In the early 1970s, there were a number of reports once again aimed at reforming our high schools. Some proposals called for major restructuring while others dealt with some *single* aspect of secondary education. The National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education (Martin, 1974) was established by the USOE to provide a status report on secondary education, identify the kinds of reform needed, and describe the policy issues and research and development programs which would provide the knowledge needed for renewal. The panel concluded that major problems exist in the high schools as a consequence of changing patterns of adolescent growth and development; that the institutions must become more flexible to respond to the shifting demands placed on them; that the schools have isolated adolescents both from adults and children, while having themselves become increasingly isolated from other institutions; that while the nation has nearly attained its egalitarian aim of universal secondary education, it has not created the reality of a comprehensive high school encompassing both "a range of educational purposes and an integrated social setting for all youth;" that so-called innovative efforts to respond to changing needs too often result in schools splintering "their curriculum into busywork" and drifting "deeper into an imposed custodial

function that often drives the majority of students out of school shortly after the roll is taken;" and that vocational education is frequently so out of phase with real-life requirements that graduates are no more employable than are dropouts. The National Panel argued that the goals of comprehensive education cannot all be attained inside the high schools nor should the responsibilities for comprehensive education be placed on the high school alone: "If the school is to be relieved of the sense of responsibility of solving most, if not all of the social ills and problems of the country, then it must find ways of sharing the time of students with other delivery systems" (p. 61).

The Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee (Coleman, 1974) focused on the period of transition from child to adult (the age period 14-24) and the institutions in which the transition takes place, the high school and college, both of which have replaced work settings in which youth was spent in earlier generations. The Coleman panel argued that schooling does not provide a "complete environment giving all the necessary opportunities for becoming adult." The school provides a particular kind of environment—"individualistic, oriented toward cognitive achievement, imposing dependency on and withholding authority and responsibility from those in the role of students." When the period of schooling was short, with young people being brought into economic productivity as early as possible, then the school represented only a supplement to the main activities of growing up and thus mattered little. But, when school expanded to fill up the time which other activities—mainly work—had once occupied and youth were kept off the labor market, then "society's prescription for youth has been merely more of what was prescribed them as children: more school." The panel urged that we now move toward a new phase in our treatment of youth, a phase "including schooling but neither defined nor limited by it." And, it argued that "widely different objectives require different institutions, and the school is not adequate as a pervasive environment for all these objectives" (p. xiii).

As did the National Panel, the Coleman panel raised a number of issues about the consequences of age segregation—segregation of youth from adults, children, and even other-aged youth by institutional grouping practices. Distinguishing between what the panel called "self-development or learning activities" and "productive activities," the Coleman panel saw youth engaged almost completely in learning activities until formal schooling ended at which time there was an abrupt shift to productive-type activities. There was increasing evidence, the report noted, "that this pattern is not the best one for all youth, and perhaps is best for none." There are alternative patterns with different mixes of study and work, full- and part-time. The panel weighed the values of including nonacademic activities in formal schooling and argued that the productive activities proposed are best developed outside the school. Finally, the report urged a reexamination of the legal status and rights of youth, suggesting that

present legal protections in fact provide serious constraints on the transition of youth to productive adulthood.

The National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education (Brown, 1973) was established by the Charles F. Kettering Foundation. The Kettering Foundation also sponsored Task Force '74, a National Task Force for High School Reform. Kettering's National Commission set forth six "conditions" which they saw affecting secondary schools and which have implications for reform:

1. The costs of operating high schools more than doubled in the preceding decade and the student population came from diverse backgrounds. With the nation's population now at zero-growth, education, which had been the country's fastest growing enterprise, ceased expanding and became instead "the victim of an economy of declining populations."
2. In the past 20 years, what had been a major teacher shortage changed to a teacher surplus providing new conditions for selecting and training teachers with the high schools now exercising far greater influence in the design and implementation of teacher training programs.
3. A decade of innovation and experimentation in secondary education was perceived by the Commission as having "had little or no lasting effect on the content of school programs or the quality of teaching and learning."
4. The high schools were described by the Commission as "beleaguered institutions"—compulsory attendance laws are no longer working, tardiness and class cutting are rampant, and crime has become part of the normal experience of many high schools.
5. The schools' problems are compounded, the Commission observed, by society's insistence on sudden and traumatic mission changes.
6. The Commission noted but discounted efforts to eliminate high schools and to deschool society as simply "an exercise in scholarly discourse" (pp. 4-12).

The Kettering Commission's Task Force '74 (Brown, 1973) examined three issues which had been raised by the National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education and argued that if schools were to respond better to the students enrolled, four principles would have to be accepted and implemented. First, citizens and parents must become actively involved in forming policies, making decisions, and governing their schools. Second, students must be informed as to their rights and those rights must be assured through due process procedures. Third, education for responsibility must become the school's prime function, and such responsibility is best acquired through experiencing the relationship between action and consequences. And, finally, a variety of programs alternative to the traditional high school must be tested and established, especially alternative work/study and youth service programs.

The California Commission for Reform of Intermediate and Secondary Education (California RISE Commission, 1975) observed that "the unparalleled and tumultuous changes that have taken place in American

society and in the character of American youth—particularly in the last three decades—are presenting public education today with a new and bewildering set of challenges" (p. 10). Citing "the alarming statistics that . . . reveal the unstable social climate in which children are being raised today and the magnitude of some of the problems schools throughout California now face" (p. xi), the Commission asserted there was a desperate need for comprehensive reform. The RISE Commission rejected what it called the traditional view of schooling—"restricted to a piece of real estate where licensed adults teach and students passively learn during specified times of the day" and projected in its stead "a school system that takes place at many times and places in which both adults and young people work as teachers and learners . . . [one] that attracts, motivates, and satisfies young people" (p. 2). In such a system, the Commission observed, "society itself is at the core of schooling." The Commission proposed a new learner, a new learning environment, a new emphasis on learning, a new educator, and new resources and responsibilities, all designed "to create a flexible, challenging, and satisfying environment for learning that motivates young people to remain in school, strive for excellence, and pursue lifelong learning."

The National Manpower Institute (Wirtz, 1975) tackled the problem of education and work being "distinctively separate developments controlled by independent institutional sovereignties—with the consequence that in most people's lives learning and earning pass as totally isolated chapters" (p. 1). The report asserted that an "education-work policy is not one that misconceives of education as having for its purpose the preparation of people for work" but rather "it *includes* this purpose as part of education's function of preparing people for life, of which work is one part; it takes full account of learning as a human value itself." Similarly, work should not be viewed in a narrow vocational sense but "it *includes* vocational values" with labor conceived of "not only as a unit of production but as a human value" as well (p. 3). The Institute Council raised serious questions about an educational norm of not 10 years but 14 to 16, suggesting that "it is by no means clear that what is now being covered can be best absorbed by every human system at one long sitting." The idea that "everybody should 'stay in school until you're finished,'" has already disintegrated, the report noted, "to the point that it is now held together mostly by a combination of administrative convenience and false parental pride and concern." The Institute explored possible arrangments for youth to move out of school for a year or two or longer when appropriate to their development, and then move back in when that makes sense. The basic argument of the report was that education and work are not two worlds—one for youth and the other for adults; that no new and sufficient meaning of growth will result from building better bridges between schoolroom and employment office; and that what was needed was the development of a lifetime continuum of education and work opportunities. The report concerned itself, therefore, with alternative provisions for continuous self-renewal interspersing learning and the earning of a living.

In its deliberations, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1973) had studied the interrelationships between the schools and the colleges from many aspects. In an earlier report, *A Chance to Learn*, the Commission had recommended that "the first priority in the nation's commitment to equal educational opportunity be placed upon the increased effectiveness of the nation's elementary and secondary schools" (p. 53). In its report, *Continuity and Discontinuity: Higher Education and the Schools*, the Commission discussed needed improvements in secondary education as these relate to school-college relationships. The key issue schools faced according to the Commission was the old but important one of freedom versus restraint: "The sharp swing of the pendulum toward freedom and relaxation of rules throughout the country has created an atmosphere in which the general public sees lack of 'discipline' as the most serious problem" confronting the schools. At the same time, liberal critics described the schools as "among the most formal, hierarchic, and even authoritarian institutions in American life" (p. 63). The report urged deliberate experimentation with a diversity of means for reaching common ends and a system of accountability for teachers and adminstrators. The Commission suggested a review and analysis of the general educational requirements for graduation from high school, expanding the options, and linking school and college studies to provide continuity. Questioning the historical domination of textbook writing by college faculty members, the Commission suggested a national study "to seek ways to improve the system by which curricular materials are chosen, created, and marketed," including possible uses of educational technology.

The National Committee on Secondary Education of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Conference Report, Marland, 1972) studied means for broadening options for youth in the 15-20 age bracket. The report urged promotion of the idea of *action learning*, "learning from experience and associated study that can be assessed and accredited by an educational institution" (p. vi). Such experiential learning is to take place in settings other than the classroom, may involve paid or unpaid work or service, or personal performance, as in writing, art, drama, or music. The National Commission on Resources for Youth is already implementing this concept.

The Educational Facilities Laboratory and I/D/E/A (Weinstock, 1973) conference asserted that "though youth is no longer the same, and the world is no longer the same, high schools are essentially unchanged from what they were at the beginning of the century" (p. 67). Youth live in two worlds, one inside the high school where every phase of their lives is dictated and the other outside where they are involved in decision making and exercise considerable self-determination. The report called for breaking the institutional mold and creating "a fresh organizational structure that will remove from the school some of its traditional functions and by so doing, inject new life into them. By placing these functions outside the school, there is a chance of freeing people to move beyond bureaucratic practice" (p. 71).

Summary

The panels, commissions, and conference groups were not unlike their predecessors in issuing reports calling for reforming high schools; however, their membership appears broader in some cases. While earlier committees were dominated first by college personnel and later by school administrators, a few students, parents, teachers, representatives of labor and industry, and members of the general public were to be found on some of the committees of the 1970s. Male domination still persisted and racial and ethnic minorities were still scarce. The groups deliberated and studied anywhere from two to three days to a period of years. Special papers were commissioned by some panels. A published report urging change was the product as it had been with their predecessors. The number of recommendations range up to the 32 contained in the Kettering Commission report. The specific recommendations varied from major radical proposals to other which seemed quite mundane. There appeared to be a number of common themes in the recommendations including the following:

1. The objectives of youth education are broad and encompassing. When the reports are explicit as to the objectives of youth education, they set forth aims more like those areas in the *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* than statements limited to the acquisition of cognitive skills and knowledge. Such aims, however, are concerned with the education of youth and not with secondary schooling alone.
2. The high school does not and cannot provide a complete environment for youth education. The Coleman Report (1974) concluded that "the school system, as now constituted, offers an incomplete context for the accomplishment of many facets of maturation" (p. 2). The Martin Report (1974) proposed "replacing the unattained concept of the comprehensive high school with a more practical goal of providing comprehensive education through a variety of means including schools" (p. 19). The task of the high school, the Martin panel argued, should shift from one of teaching to one of arranging for delivery of services: "scheduling, evaluating, registering, monitoring and continuously communicating information on adolescent education" (p. 43).
3. The age-segregation of youth must be overcome if they are to be provided with a more complete environment for transition to adulthood. The Martin Report asserted that "in prolonging youth's dependence we have used our schools, inadvertently, as the social 'aging vats' that have isolated adolescents and delayed their learning adult roles, work habits, and skills" (p. 3). The isolation of adolescents could be reduced, the panel suggested, by the creation of comunity-based learning centers for youth and adults, separate from the high school, and the inauguration of programs involving joint participation of adolescents and adults who would together "learn by doing what is socially useful, personally satisfying, and health supporting for the individual and the community."

4. An effective education-work policy must be developed. The Martin Report proposed providing youth with real-jobs-with-real-work through a program that would emphasize job-knowledge, on-the-job training, occupational citizenship, and job placement. More radical proposals come from the Coleman Report which advocated testing programs including alternating school and work to provide a mixture of part-time work and part-time schooling in a variety of time cycles; reserving time within work organizations for formal instruction so that both adults and youth "would engage in a mixture of roles including learning, teaching, and work;" establishing youth communities and youth organizations in which adolescents would provide "most of the services, have most of the authority, and carry out most of the responsibility;" and creating work opportunities through federally funded public service programs. The National Manpower Institute (Wirtz, 1975) recommended developing the concept of career education more fully by "infusing the general education process with various forms of exposure to the meaning of work and service;" making actual work or service experience an integral part of all young people's education; and facilitating a student's moving in and out of the educational sequence as it seems appropriate to the individual.
5. The barriers to youth for work and service, in both law and custom, should be reexamined. Two reports proposed experimentation with a dual minimium wage, lower for young workers than for more mature ones. The National Manpower Institute advocated establishing a broad-based Community Education-Work Council.
6. Citizenship education should be moved into the larger community while, at the same time, it is developed in the school through exercise of students' rights and responsibilities. The Martin Report proposed that education for citizenship involve youth in social, political, and governmental agencies where they can practice citizenship skills, with the experiences supplemented by the academic study of the social sciences with their distinct methodologies and including seminars and classes in which the community experiences are mediated. The Brown Report proposed that the exercise of due process rights of students would contribute to development of their citizenship skills.
7. A variety of educational options and alternative programs should be provided both within and outside the school with public financial support for students exercising choice among the alternatives. The Task Force '74 Report suggested two categories of alternatives: one that includes a degree of structure, including use of space and allocation of time; the other that includes curricular design and the student population serviced. The Martin Report (1974) suggested that alternatives might include, but not be limited to, "mini-schools, schools-without-walls, open schools, alternative schools, optimal programs, internships, parallel courses, independent study, free schools, and apprentice and action learning" (p. 44). The Brown Report (1973) saw the variety of alternatives "limited only by the legitimate needs of adolescents and the

vivacity of the imagination of educational planners." In fact, the report recommended that: "every adolescent should, with proper guidance, be able to select those forms of schooling and learning most congenial to his basic learning style, philosophic orientation, and tastes" (p. 101).

8. The range and kinds of nonformal educational opportunities should be be expanded. The reports assert that the schools' obsession with credentialing and accreditation causes them to prefer formal education. Many of the alternative programs provide learning experiences in nonformal settings, moving students out of the classrooms and into the community where they engage in experiential learning. The Brown Report (1973) urged that schools recognize "that authentic learning can take place in a wide variety of settings, many of them remote from the schoolhouse" and that credit should be given for both nontraditional and nonformal learning experiences (pp. 99-100).
9. Compulsory attendance laws should be changed so as to lower the school-leaving age. Individuals should be offered alternatives to the conventional 12-year schooling pattern. The Brown Report argues that earlier physical, sexual, and intellectual maturity mandates an option for earlier departure from formal schooling. Furthermore, the Brown Report declares: "By the age of fourteen, a student who has not developed some motivation toward learning, is not likely to profit from compulsory schooling" (pp. 41-42).
10. Individuals should be provided with educational vouchers that could be used for a wide range of skill training as well as further education. The Brown Report proposes federal and state legislation that would entitle every citizen to fourteen years of tuition-free education, only eight of which would be compulsory. The remaining six years would be available to the individual for use at any stage of his life. The Coleman Report (1974) recommends the use of educational vouchers from age sixteen that would be the equivalent in value to the average cost of four years of college. Thus, the Coleman Report argues for placing the decision for further education and training in the hands of youth "who will themselves experience the consequences, and would likely encourage wiser management of one's affairs than do current institutions" (p. xxiv).
11. Youth should be provided with opportunities for furloughs, whereby they can move in and out of schools as appropriate. The National Manpower Institute (Wirtz, 1975) recommends "a considered break" wherein the student, with adequate counseling, would step out of the educational sequence for a year or two and then return, receiving credit for his out-of-school experience. The California RISE Commission (1975) advocated student furloughs "of flexible duration, of educational value to the learner, and consistent with the learner's educational needs and objectives" with credit being given the learner if he meets specified objectives (p. 11).
12. The learning and teaching resources of school and community should be integrated, not just for alternative programs but rather for the total

educational process. Much learning takes place in the community or "real world." The Martin Report (1974) urges schools "to identify, obtain, and utilize fully and effectively those physical and human resources in the community that can contribute to achieving learning objectives" (p. 132). Included in these resources are the family, the media, museums, religious institutions, as well as business, labor, industry, government, service agencies, and individual residents.

13. Secondary education should be designed as an integral part in a lifetime continuum of education, alternating incidental and informal lifelong learning with more organized and intentional educational opportunities. The various proposals for broadly usable educational vouchers are aimed, in part, toward one kind of continuing education as is the notion of furloughs.
14. Flexibility in time sequences—hourly, daily, weekly, and yearly—should be provided so that youth can have the time needed for a particular kind of learning in which they are involved. If community resources are to be utilized, standard high school periods are not possible and blocks of time appropriate to the activity need to be arranged. If secondary education is to take place in work settings, flexible time arrangements are required.
15. The size of the high school should be drastically reduced and its functions made more specialized. The Coleman Report suggests that high schools should have not more than five hundred students and that each school should be genuinely specialized, including but not limited to academic specialties. Youth should be free to attend one or more of such specialized schools simultaneously. Other reports urge the establishment of schools-within-schools, mini-schools, and alternative schools aimed at creating different kinds of environments from those in the traditionally large high school.
16. The high school should accept responsibility for intellectual development of youth with other agencies and institutions taking responsibility for other kinds of development. Work, citizenship education, and aesthetic education are among the areas for which nonschool agencies would be given greater responsibility by the Martin Report (1974) which hoped "that the removal of non-academic fat will result in a needed lean and hungry devotion to the development of a maturing intellect" (p. 60). That report suggested an academic day of two-to-four hours with every adolescent involved in one or more programs in settings away from the high school.

The various reports had other specific recommendations that dealt with student and teacher accountability, school security, institutional sexism and racism, and community involvement, among others. However, the common themes in the various reports provided a clear picture of what was being advocated in the way of restructuring secondary education. The main purposes of secondary education were generally being reaffirmed but the functions of secondary schools were being questioned. Viewing the present-day high school as an overburdened, beleaguered institution,

sometimes on the verge of collapse, the various panels and commissions recommended that secondary educators, with community participation, assert leadership in the building of a system of youth education that used more of the community's educative resources—including those of the high school.

There are many educating and socializing agencies, some or many of which may be more influential than formal schooling in their developmental effects on youth. The reports proposed reforming the schools by integrating the learning resources of school and community, by making available a wide variety of educational options and program alternatives to attain educational objectives, by involving the school in providing valid and meaningful work experiences for all, and by the school's shedding some of its primary and ancillary functions.

The recommendations of the various commissions and panels were based on certain assumptions and interpretation of data that may have been inaccurate or incomplete. They seemed to focus on that quarter of the youth population that was white, male, and middle class and neglected the minority groups, the poor, and females. They seemed to have a unitary view of the fifteen thousand or so high schools across the nation, although they did single out large urban schools from time to time. They did discuss the "youth culture" but seemed to view this culture as that which existed at the time the studies were being done—late 1960s and early 1970s. Basic curricular questions were only vaguely addressed. And, the reports did not deal with the prime residents of the high school—students, staff, and parents.

At the time the reports were criticized because they gave little attention to the life and the climate of the school, the intricate networks of social interaction involving the individuals and groups who comprise the school's social system. The classrooms are but one part of that social system—affected by the hierarchies and the exercise of power; by learning environments, structured and unstructured; and by the formal and informal transactions—all of which exercise considerable influence on learning and socialization. Students were maturing earlier; they were more knowledgeable about some aspects of life, having been exposed to television and other media. Insights into the professional staff and teaching have raised questions about the existence of a sense of community and professional colleagueship as these affect learning. Attention to the school climate could well affect curriculum and instruction—both in their formal and informal aspects. To the triad of learner, society, and knowledge on which curriculum was to be based as propounded in the *Cardinal Principles*, a fourth element now needed to be added—the school as an institution with a life, a climate, and ongoing transactions of its own.

III. 1983 — The Year of the Education Reports

A November, 1983, publication of the Education Commission of the States began as follows:

> 1983 has been the Year of the Report on Education. Hardly a month has passed without the release of a major report by a prestigious group of citizens concerned about the nature of American education. And sprinkled between the major releases have been dozens of state task force reports, interim studies and articles about school renewal, effective schools, business-school partnerships or ways to meet the educational needs of a rapidly changing society (p. 1).

Looking at the virtual avalanche of reports, it is sometimes difficult to recall that there was a similar outpouring barely seven or eight years ago although on a somewhat smaller scale. The analyses at that time took very different directions from those of current studies and certainly the recommendations differed dramatically. Interestingly, the reform reports of the 1970s are virtually ignored by the present studies.

Students of this reform report phenomenon of the 1980s have raised a number of questions about it: Why this burst of activity on the part of such diverse groups at this time? Why so many panels, commissions, and study groups? Some 29 different ones participated in the Wingspread Conference in November, 1982. Why is the focus once again on the secondary school as the educational unit most in need of reform? Since reform reports have been issued regularly for almost a century, why should the reforms called for be expected to be implemented at this juncture in our educational and national history? There are speculations concerning these many ways but no clear answers.

Some Reform Reports

The National Commission on Excellence in Education was created by Secretary of Education T. H. Bell on August 26, 1981, to examine the quality of education in the nation's schools and colleges, paying particular attention to the educational experiences of adolescents and youth. The Commission was created as a consequence of Bell's concern about "the wide-spread public perception that something is seriously remiss in our educational system" and the need for defining problems which must be faced and overcome if we are successfully to pursue the course of excellence in education." (pp. 1-2). Although the National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education had been created in 1972 by the then-U.S. Commissioner of Education, Sidney P. Marland, Jr., for the very same purpose, it was T. H. Bell in his capacity as U.S. Commissioner of Education who received the report in 1974.

In his foreword to the Carnegie Foundation report, *High School,* Boyer recounts that the trustees met in the spring of 1980 to consider a study of secondary education. While acknowledging the importance of home influences and the early years of schooling on the development of children and youth, the trustees agreed that the upper years were strategically important. As Boyer (1983) reports:

> There was also broad agreement that the American high schools are severely buffeted by changes in the community, in family life, and in student attitudes. They also have been weakened by reduced support, declining public confidence, and confusion over goals. We could not ignore these signals of distress.
>
> The trustees concluded the time had come to examine the current condition of American secondary education; the time had come for the nation's high schools to serve their students more effectively and regain public confidence and support (p. xi).

A decade earlier, the Kettering Foundation established its National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, chaired by B. Frank Brown, with a charge "to make a comprehensive examination of secondary education and provide the American public with a clear, factual picture of their secondary schools, indicating where and how they can be altered to better serve the nation's young people" (1973, p. xiv).

In the preface to *A Place Called School,* Goodlad (1983) wrote:

> An intriguing thing has happened since the time my colleagues and I began the work on which this book is based. The context of widespread disaffection with schooling in the United States has shifted to one much less easily characterized. Criticism abounds, to be sure, but the indiscriminate giving of it has become less fashionable. There is even a growing mood that some schools are now beginning to improve rather than continuing to get worse. If some schools are getting better, so can others (p. xv).

In the prospectus for A Study of High Schools, Sizer observed that the sense of optimism and comitment surrounding America's efforts "to meet an unprecedented variety of academic and social needs in its secondary schools" seemed to be slipping away, that America was losing confidence in its high schools. Sizer noted that "for more than a decade educational commentators, social researchers and reformers have pictured high schools as a source of social problems rather than as a solution to them." A Study of High Schools was undertaken, Sizer noted, to provide a fuller perspective on the high schools before they "are pronounced failures and

radical solutions are adopted."

The College Board's Educational EQuality Project, begun in 1980, is a ten-year effort "to strengthen the academic quality of secondary education and to insure equality of opportunity for postsecondary education for all students" (College Board, 1983). The Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools, of the Southern Regional Education Board, was appointed in January, 1981, to examine the linkages between schools and colleges and to identify the issues and problems which must be dealt with to strengthen education at all levels.

The Twentieth Century Fund's Task Force on Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Policy (1983) noted in the foreword to its report that "there are few problems more critical than those facing the nation's public schools" and, consequently, although the Fund had never done studies in education, its trustees, "convinced that the problems of American education are at the heart of many of our economic and social difficulties, urged that [the Fund] undertake an examination of our schools" (p. v.).

In its letter of transmittal to the National Science Foundation's National Science Board (1983), the Commission on Precollege Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology pointed out that the "Commission does not simply decry the present inadequate state of many of the Nation's schools. Rather, we spell out a detailed plan of action for all sectors of society to address the very serious problems facing America's elementary and secondary educational systems in mathematics, science and technology."

The Education Commission of the State's Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, convinced that the nation's survival depends on revamping the educational system, argued that "our future success as a nation—our national defense, our social stability and well-being and our national prosperity—will depend on our ability to improve education and training for millions of individual citizens" (1983, p. 14).

Reasons to Press for Reforms

That the nation's schools have serious problems and are in trouble is a point of view on which all of the study groups seems to be in agreement. However, the shortcomings and problems of the schools and the issues of education in the 1980s are hardly new. For instance, the areas of concern and criticism cited a half dozen years ago included the following:

> *The inadequacy and inappropriateness of school curricula which are so characterized both for omissions and commissions.* Emphasis on traditional subject matter or life skills, on cognitive or affective development, on academic or social learnings—each focus is criticized depending on the varied conceptions of what the mission of the secondary school is or should be.
>
> *The apparent decline in achievement as manifested*

in the nationwide drop in various test scores. The concern with the steady drop in SAT and ACT scores of college applicants has been the subject of much study and speculation. More important, however, has been the introduction of legislation and regulation for state- and system-wide minimal competency testing designed to insure basic levels of performance for a high school diploma.

The quality and performance of the teaching staff. Not only is the initial training and continuing education being debated . . . but the absence of accountability and the growing organizational strength and exercise of power gained through collective bargaining agreements and political alignments are also concerns.

The inadequacy of vocational and technical education programs. The quality of vocational and technical education programs even for the minority of the secondary school population that has access to them continues to be questioned. The incomplete development of the notion of career education has not yet made possible a valid testing of the concept for the youth population generally.

The serious questioning of compulsory attendance laws. When truancy is now coupled with the newer phenomenon of rampant cutting of classes, the problem is confounded. It is being argued that compulsory attendance laws are either not enforceable or that the cost of enforcement is too great.

Isolation of the high schools. Secondary schools are perceived as isolated from other youth-serving, educating, and socializing institutions and agencies so that the impact of experiences in these non-school settings is not purposefully related to those under the guidance of the schools.

Program inflexibility and lack of individualized instruction. Despite perennial rhetoric concerning individual differences and the need for differentiated instruction, secondary schools tend to be programmatically inflexible, routinized, and even authoritarian. (Passow, 1977, pp. 19-21).

There are other areas of concern as well: violence and vandalism, issues of equality and inequality, to name just two. The annual Gallup Polls on the public's perception of the schools and education have been remarkably consistent over the past decade in recording an erosion of confidence in the schools as well as concern about their functioning and the quality of

education delivered. However, in the past year or two, the public has viewed some aspects of schooling as improving.

One can speculate that at least some impetus for reappraising the quality of education in America stems not from any significant changes in the continuing areas of concern but rather from the decade or so of economic turmoil the nation has experienced which led to a serious recession (or depression) and severe unemployment, not only among the hard-core unemployed but middle- and executive-class individuals as well. In describing the risk the nation faces, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) asserted:

> Knowledge, learning, information, and skilled intelligence are the new raw materials of international commerce and are today spreading throughout the world as vigorously as miracle drugs, synthetic fertilizers, and blue jeans did earlier. If only to keep and improve on the slim competitive edge we still retain in world markets, we must dedicate ourselves to the reform of our educational system for the benefit of all—old and young alike, affluent and poor, majority and minority. Learning is the indispensable investment required for success in the "information age" we are entering (p. 7).

The National Science Board's Commission begins the Executive Summary of its report (1983) with this statement:

> The Nation that dramatically and boldly led the world into the age of technology is failing to provide its own children with the intellectual tools needed for the 21st century . . . .Already the quality of our manufactured products, the viability of our trade, our leadership in research and development, and our standards of living are strongly challenged. Our children could be stragglers in the world of technology. We must not let this happen; America must not become an industrial dinosaur. We must not provide our children a 1960s education for a 21st century world (p. v).

Thus, an element in the press for educational reform seems to be the concern for America's capacity to compete in various markets. A similar concern was the major stimulus for educational reform which followed the launching of Sputnik in October, 1957, and led to the intensive efforts to improve education in mathematics, science and foreign languages. The National Defense Education Act of 1958 was central to reform efforts at the time.

Former U.S. Commissioner of Education Harold Howe II, commenting on the unprecedented interest in school reform created by the wave of

reports and studies, suggests that among the reasons are these:

> Frustration over the diminishing capacity of the U.S. to compete in worldwide markets has awakened new interest in the old idea that the quality of human resources is a key element in the efficiency of the nation's economy. Better schools that produce better-educated workers are thought to be the way to outsell the Japanese and Germans.
>
> Another version of the same idea applies to our defense establishment and national security. How can we keep ahead of the Soviets if their youth are better educated than ours? (Howe, 1983, p. 168).

Beyond commercial and industrial competition and national security, Howe believes that the dissatisfaction with American education's academic achievement as manifested by declining test scores and the schools' inability to resolve civil rights issues have led to "a typically American reaction . . . : let's stop complaining about our educational problems and do something about them (p. 168).

Clearly, a combination of factors accounts for the burst of activity on the reform scene at this time—societal, political, economic, geopolitical as well as educational. A decade ago, the Kettering Commission (1973) suggested six "conditions" which it saw affecting secondary schools and having implications for secondary education reform. These included:

1. *The end of the boom in education.* In the prior decade, the costs of operating high schools doubled and student populations came from more diverse backgrounds even as enrollments declined. What had been the nation's fastest growing enterprise had become "the victim of declining populations."
2. *Teacher surplus from a teacher shortage.* A teacher shortage of one million in 1955 had reached a surplus of more than 125,000 by 1973. This fact had implications, the Commission believed, for teacher trainee selection and education, for in-service education and for raising the quality of teachers and teaching.
3. *Reflection on a decade of innovation.* The period 1962-1972 had been described as the decade of experimentation and innovation. On reflection, the efforts were seen as having "had little or no lasting effect on the content of school programs or the quality of teaching and learning."
4. *High schools in crisis.* The Commission saw high schools as "beleaguered institutions" with the

large-city schools "on the verge of complete collapse." Compulsory attendance laws were no longer working; tardiness and class cutting were rampant. Violence and vandalism had become *the normal experience in many high schools*, sufficiently so that Congressional committees were investigating the situation. Declining achievement, dwindling attendance, reduced enrollments and crime in the schools were viewed by the Commission as "diseases [which] must be diagnosed and cured."

5. *Changes in mission.* Among the high schools' problems "has been society's insistence on sudden and traumatic changes in their mission." The schools were viewed as "striving to meet the complex demands of a society in the throes of social change."
6. *The deschooling movement.* The Commission believed that the efforts to eliminate high schools were not to be taken too seriously (pp. 9-10).

Many of these "conditions" are still present today. Changes in family structure, employment patterns, social relations, economic conditions, international relations together with conditions in the schools have focused attention of various segments of the nation on education and schooling as they affect and are affected by other aspects of society.

Why So Many Reports?

The number of reports and study groups in 1983 far exceeds anything experienced before. In the 1970s there were some eight or ten reports. Speculation as to why so many different projects at this time is difficult. It is not as if one group did not know of the existence of others since some directors of some projects served on the advisory committees of others. It may be that each of the projects conceived of its mandate or its focus as bringing some unique insight to the generalized problem of educational reform either by the way it approached its task or by the aspect or aspects of education it was studying. Some projects focused on improving education in mathematics and science, or on federal and state roles in education, or on curriculum for the college-going, or on the improvement or reform process itself. More groups, however, dealt with the problems at the macro level, tackling the high schools or secondary education *in toto*. Each of the study groups believed that it had something unique to say about the nature of the problems and the reforms needed.

Fred M. Newman and Steven L. Behar (1982) characterized the main concerns of the 29 groups which participated in the 1982 Wingspread Conference as follows:

> program content (courses of study and student

> learning outcomes), teaching (classroom practices and teachers' characteristics), school climate and organization (institutional procedures, role definitions, and expectations that affect life in schools), and the process of school improvement (methods of implementing innovations and of helping schools to engage in rational planning, cooperative functioning, self-evaluation, and renewal). Some projects define their mission as improving or studying the education of particular groups of students such as minority, disadvantaged, or college bound (p. 6).

At the state level, proliferation would be expected as each state tackled the issues and undertook reform activities for the schools within its jurisdiction. Walton (1983) reported that during the first 11 months of 1983, 54 state-level commissions had been formed to study educational improvement needs, many since the publication of the report, *A Nation at Risk*. That survey found that about 104 formal state-sponsored commissions had been established since 1980. The Education Commission of the States (1983) estimated a much higher number: over 175 such state task forces "already tackling complex education reform issues" by the end of 1983.

Why the Focus on the High School?

As to why high schools and secondary education were the focus of study and recommendations for reform, some speculations are possible although there are few clear indications. The College Board Educational EQuality Project focuses on what high school students should know and be able to do. The National Commission on Excellence in Education was charged with reporting on "the quality of education in America," but limited its findings and recommendations almost exclusively to high schools, without explaining why except that it was charged with paying particular attention to the high schools. Boyer writes that the Carnegie Foundation trustees considered the high school years as strategically important: "For many students, high school is the last opportunity for formal learning, and it is during late adolescence that critical life decisions are frequently made (p. xi).

For almost a century, it is the high school that has been the focus of most educational reform efforts. It was the high school which was blamed for America's placing second in the race to orbit a space capsule. It was the high school which was the focus of reappraisal after the turbulent years of the 1960s. And, it is the high school which the National Commission on Excellence in Education and other more important studies have focused on in the 1980s. The "strategically important" place of the secondary school may be its role as providing a transition between the elementary school, which is still viewed as the real common school, and the world of work or of higher education. It is the high school which continues a sorting

and selecting function. It is the high school which is the recruiting ground for postsecondary education and for the world of work. If the high schools fail to provide quality programs in mathematics and science, for example, colleges and universities will not provide the mathematicians, scientists and engineers the nation needs. If the high schools do not develop an adequate level of literacy, colleges and universities cannot provide the necessary remediation except at a high educational cost.

It can be argued that reform at the pre-school, early childhood, and elementary school years might obviate or at least reduce the need for reform at the secondary level. There would, of course, still be a need for reexamining the nature and quality of secondary education but it would have a different focus. Why are the high schools always at the center of calls for educational reform? Probably because the high schools are the institutions in the middle, playing a particularly critical role providing either terminal education or preparatory education for youth who are part of a culture which sets them apart from childhood and adulthood, who are both dependent and independent, mature and yet maturing.

Moreover, adolescence is viewed as a particularly difficult period and adolescents represent a difficult group for which to provide an appropriate education, to guide and control, and to assist in the transition to adulthood.

In the past, most calls for educational reform did not carry with them warrants for action and implementation. Conant (1959) wrote his report, *The American High School Today*, for board of education members and "other interested citizens," believing that the board members as the decision-makers would see that his 21 recommendations served as the basis for reform of the nation's comprehensive high schools. A significant difference between today's calls for educational reform and those of the past is not one of clarion quality but in the fact that never before have scores of task forces been organized to prepare mandates and legislation for state legislatures and state departments to enact and to implement. Whether the number of such task forces is 104 or 175 or some other number, in December, 1983, Walton (1983) could write: "An *Education Week* national survey of education reform suggests that the movement to improve schooling that began several years ago has taken root in all 50 states, becoming so well established that in many the issue is not whether to make changes, but when and how those changes should be made (p. 5). Moreover, while it was not clear how long it would remain so, educational reform had achieved a high priority status on the political scene as well. Not since Sputnik had education been at the center of so much attention. As Howe (1983) put it, publication of the reports "has resulted in a totally new environment for thinking about educational issues in the U.S. Suddenly corporate barons, Presidential candidates, university presidents, governors, and legislative leaders in the Congress and state capitols have mounted a crusade to improve the schools (p. 167). Boyer (1983) saw the situation as "the best opportunity for school renewal we will get this century" (p. 1).

Recommendations

Some 15 reports—the essence of their diagnoses of the problems of education and their recommendations for reform—are summarized in the second volume of this study. Despite differences in focus, styles of inquiry, and recommendations for reform, there are some common themes in the current crop of reports, just as there were in the multiple reports of the 1970s. These themes provide agendas for consideration of educational reforms, not blueprints for reform. The recommendations are not always in agreement with one another, although the thrust of the reports is similar: improving the quality of learning and teaching, rebuilding public confidence in the schools, and promoting excellence.

Excellence and Equity

Included in the charge and responsibilities of the National Commission on Excellence in Education was that it "do all other things needed to define the problems of and the barriers to attaining greater levels of excellence in American education" (1983, p. 40). The Commission defined excellence at three levels:

> At the level of the *individual learner*, it means performing on the boundary of individual ability in ways that test and push back personal limits, in school and in the workplace. Excellence characterizes a *school or college* that sets high expectations and goals for all learners, then tries in every way possible to help students reach them. Excellence characterizes a *society* that has adopted these policies, for it will then be prepared through the education and skill of its people to respond to the challenges of a rapidly changing world (p. 12).

What the National Commission and other groups have done to take action on that definition is to recommend, among other things, the raising of standards; setting higher requirements for high school graduation and college admission; eliminating "soft" subjects and mandating a common core curriculum for all students; increasing requirements in mathematics, science, and foreign languages; enforcing standards by testing achievement more regularly; lenghtening the school day and the school year; and generally getting tough with students, teachers, and administrators.

In the same section on "Excellence in Education," the National Commission asserts that a strong commitment to excellence and educational reform need not mean a diminution in the commitment to providing high quality education to a very diverse student population: "The twin goals of equity and high quality schooling have profound and practical meaning for our economy and society, and we cannot permit one to yield to the other either in principle or practice" (p. 13).

Adler argues that the revolutionary message of John Dewey's *Democracy and Education* "was that a democratic society must provide equal educational opportunity not only by giving to all its children the

same quantity of public education—the same number of years in school—but also by making sure to give all of them, all with no exceptions, the same quality of education" (p. 4). Adler's *Paideia Proposal* (1982) advocates the same objectives of schooling for all and the same course of study for all. As Adler puts it, "The best education for the best is the best education for all."

Boyer (1983) points out that with the historic Brown vs. Board of Education decision in 1954, "public education was called upon to serve more equitably the historically bypassed students—the poor, the underprivileged, and the underachieving . . . .Racial balance and compensatory education became urgent new priorities. Schools became the battleground for social justice" (p. 56). Moreover, while America's population as a whole is aging, the population of minority and impoverished youth continues to be large and increases proportionately. Of special concern, Boyer notes, "is the fact that black and Hispanic young people are precisely those with whom our schools have been least successful . . . .Opportunity remains unequal. And this failure to educate *every* person to his or her full potential threatens the nation's social and economic health" (p. 5).

Goodlad's approach to the issues surrounding equity is close to that of Adler. He sees the distribution of resources for learning, and especially time, as creating inequities in opportunities to learn. He observes: "Some issues of equity regarding access to knowledge have little to do with the race or economic status of students. Others frequently do relate to socioeconomic status and race—particularly issues of differences in content and teaching practice encountered by students depending on their enrollment in high-, middle-, or low-track classes" (1983, p. 30).

As one reflects on two decades of compensatory education, with billions of dollars and thousands of programs aimed at raising levels of literacy and mathematical competence to acceptable minimum standards in an effort to create greater equity in education, one can understand the reservations and concern that the pursuit of excellence, by mandating tougher requirements and higher standards, puts the drive for educational equity into jeopardy. The *Paideia Proposal,* for example, advocates that "instruction in mathematics, beginning with simple arithmetic in the first grade, should rise to at least one year of calculus" (Adler, 1982, p. 24). Teachers and schools which have struggled with bringing students up to minimal mathematics competence are not inclined to accept the notion that it is simply a matter of will and of trying harder. Dennis Gray (1982) argues: "When schools fail, the chief missing ingredient—the necessary but absent wherewithal—is will: the will to set goals, the will to say what is essential, the will to reduce or abandon what is not, the will to do what reform-oriented research dictates" (p. 586).

Although those reports which deal directly or indirectly with the excellence versus equity issue all agree with the National Commission that both goals must be pursued and not one at the expense of the other, achievement of the goal of developing the talents of all to their fullest continues to be a challenge in terms of the means for implementing it.

The New York State Board of Regents' "Proposed Action to Improve Elementary and Secondary Education Results in New York" (1983) came under considerable criticism at ten regional hearings in the fall of 1983 as ignoring the needs of the disadvantaged and underachieving students as well as the academically gifted ones. The plan presumably continued the Regents' efforts to raise the standards and levels of expectation while accompanying it "by efforts to ensure equal access through special assistance to those in need" (p. 2). However, the requirements for the Regents-endorsed high school diploma were so rigid that critics argued that only the academic, college-bound students could earn one. All other students would have to settle for a less-prestigious local diploma. Other critics argued that the higher standards would increase the dropout rate as students, unable to meet the stiffer requirements, would withdraw from school.

Finally, even the conception of excellence may differ among its advocates. There are those who argue that higher test grades in tougher subjects constitute only one notion of excellence. In his book, *Excellence: Can We Be Excellent and Equal?* (1961), John Gardner argued that it is the quality of performance rather than the kind of work one does that is of significance in determining excellence and that society required achieving excellence in a variety of fields. High-level performance should be nurtured in widely divergent fields, not only selected academic subjects.

Goals and Objectives

There appears to be consensus that schools continue to try to do too much, responding to requests from diverse sources. As Boyer (1983) put it:

> Since the English Classical School was founded over 150 years ago, high schools have accumulated purposes like barnacles on a weathered ship. As school population expanded from a tiny urban minority to almost all youth, a coherent purpose was hard to find. The nation piled social policy upon educational policy and all of them on top of the delusion that a single institution can do it all.
>
> Today's high school is called upon to provide services and transmit values we used to expect from the community and the home and the church. And if they fail anywhere along the line, they are condemned (p. 57).

Both Goodlad and Boyer use the same phrase to answer the question of what Americans want from their schools—"We want it all!" Goodlad (1983) recounts that the then-Vice President Hubert Humphrey, speaking at the 1965 White House Conference on Education, "said that our country would go down in history for having used its educational system to overcome problems of illiteracy, unemployment, crime and violence, urban decay, and even war among nations. However, just a few years later some citizens were asking if our schools were capable of teaching our young to

read, write, and spell" (p. 33).

The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) complained that both society and its educational institutions appeared to have lost sight of the basic purposes of schooling: "That we have compromised this commitment is, upon reflection, hardly surprising, given the multitude of often conflicting demands we have placed on our Nation's schools and colleges. They are routinely called on to provide solutions to personal, social, and political problems that the home and other institutions either will not or cannot solve" (p. 6).

To be effective, Boyer believes, a school must have "a clear and vital mission," one which is shared and understood by students, teachers, administrators, and parents. Boyer and his staff found "a numbing hodgepodge of rules and regulations" as well as "vague and wide-ranging mandates" which various states had imposed on public education. In *High School* (1983) he proposes four essential goals:

> First, the high school should help all students develop the capacity to think critically and communicate effectively through a mastery of language.
>
> Second, the high school should help all students learn about themselves, the human heritage, and the interdependent world in which they live through a core curriculum based upon consequential human experiences common to all people.
>
> Third, the high school should prepare all students for work and further education through a program of electives that develop individual aptitudes and interests.
>
> Fourth, the high school should help all students fulfill their social and civic obligations through school and community service (pp. 66-67).

Goodlad (1983) offered a list of goals for schooling in order "to guide school board members, parents, students, and teachers in the needed effort to achieve a common sense direction for their schools and to build programs of teaching and learning related to these goals" (p. 51). His goals are in four domains and deal with the following areas:

A. Academic Goals
   1. Mastery of basic skills and fundamental processes
   2. Intellectual development

B. Vocational Goals
   3. Career education—vocational education

C. Social, Civic, and Cultural Goals
   4. Interpersonal understandings
   5. Citizenship participation
   6. Enculturation
   7. Moral and ethical character

D. Personal Goals
   8. Emotional and physical well-being
   9. Creativity and aesthetic expression
   10. Self-realization (pp. 51-56).

In the *Paideia Proposal,* Adler sets forth three main objectives of schooling which he argues are the same for all without exception. The first objective is to prepare every child to take advantage of every opportunity for personal growth or self-improvement—mental, moral, and spiritual—which society offers. Thus, basic schooling should "teach proficiency in the indispensable skills of learning." The second objective is concerned with the fulfillment of the individual's role as an enfranchised citizen of the republic and "requires not only the cultivation of the appropriate civic virtues, but also a sufficient understanding of the framework of our government and of its fundamental principles." The third objective "takes account of the adult's need to earn a living in one or another occupation . . . *not* by training them for one or another particular job in our industrial economy, but by giving them the basic skills that are common to all work in a society such as ours" (1982, pp. 16-17). To achieve these three objectives, basic schooling must be general and liberal and it must be nonspecialized and nonvocational.

The Twentieth Century Fund's Task Force (1983) believes that all schools must provide the same core components to all students, a core consisting of basic skills of reading, writing, and calculating; of basic computer-use capability; of science and foreign language training; and civics. The Task Force, however, feels that the schools must go further:

> We think that they should ensure the availability of large numbers of skilled and capable individuals without whom we cannot sustain a complex and competitive economy. They should foster understanding, discipline, and discernment, those qualities of mind and temperament that are the hallmarks of a civilized polity and that are essential for the maintenance of domestic tranquility in a polytechnic constitutional democracy. And they should impart to present and future generation a desire to acquire knowledge, ranging from the principles of science to the accumulated wisdom and shared values that derive from the nation's rich and varied cultural heritage (pp. 3-4).

Having set forth what it calls "admittedly formidable tasks that too few schools today come close to accomplishing," the Task Force recommends that "*the federal government clearly state that the most important objective of elementary and secondary education in the United States is the development of literacy in the English language*" (p. 11).

Understandably, the National Science Board Commission (1983) focused on mathematics and science and its one basic objective was to help

schools "by the year 1995, . . . provide all the nation's youth with a level of education in mathematics, science and technology, as measured by achievement scores and participation levels (as well as other non-subjective criteria), that is not only the highest quality attained anywhere in the world but also reflects the particular and peculiar needs of our nation" (p. 5).

Goodlad (1983) observed that "we are not without goals for schooling. But we are lacking an articulation of them and commitment to them" (p. 56). Once again there seems to be consensus that clear articulation of goals is necessary but there appears to be no clear consensus on what those goals should be. A decade ago, Coleman's Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee (1974) proposed two broad classes of objectives, one essentially self-centered in that "it concerns the acquisition of skills that expand the personal resources, and thus the opportunity of a young person" and the second outer-directed in that it "concerns the opportunity for responsibilities affecting other persons" (p. 3).

The four self-centered objectives included:

1. Acquisition of cognitive and non-cognitive skills necessary for economic independence and for occupational opportunities.
2. Development of capability of effective management of one's own affairs in an organizationally complex world.
3. Development of capabilities as a consumer, not only of goods, but more significant, of the cultural riches of civilization.
4. Development of capabilities for engaging in intense concentrated activity, whatever the specific content of the activity may be.

The Panel's three outer-directed objectives included:

1. Experience with persons differing in social class, subculture, and in age.
2. Experience in having others dependent on one's actions—apprenticeship for prospective obligations as spouse, parent, and citizen.
3. Involvement in interdependent activities directed toward collective goals (pp. 3-5).

The National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education (Martin, 1974) approached the question of objectives by stating that a comprehensive education for adolescents must provide an appropriate balance and curriculum mix in five domains: personal values, citizenship, the arts, the humanities, and techniques or career eduction (pp. 52-54).

The Kettering Commission called on every school, with community participation, to formulate a statement of goals together with performance criteria for students, to be posted conspicuously in each shool building. A National Goals Survey conducted for the Commission by George Gallup produced fourteen goals: adjustment to change (mental health), communications skills, occupational competence, responsibility for citizen-

ship, respect for law and authority, appreciation of others, knowledge of self, critical thinking, clarification of values, economic understanding, and the achievements of man, nature and environment (Brown, 1973, p. 39).

As with the current reports, the reports of the 1970s called for clarification of goals and objectives and proposed aims which were broader and more encompassing than those suggested currently. Both sets of reports are in agreement that schools are saddled with responsibilities which they are unable to discharge and both suggest clarification and limitations of the goals of schooling. However, there are differences in the proposals. The purposes expressed in the 1983 reports tend to be more traditional goals, essentially those which dominated the high school curricula of the first third of the century, those which have continued to be viewed as the college-preparatory program, and those to which the schools were called to return by the critics of progressive education in the early 1950s and following Sputnik.

Curriculum

The 1983 reports give very specific attention to matters of curriculum, standards, teaching, and testing. Several are quite explicit in recommending that all students complete a common core of prescribed subjects; that students be required to take more mathematics and science as well as more English, social studies, and foreign languages; that fewer electives be permitted; and that students be tested more frequently to assess their progress in achieving higher standards. It is in the area of more rigorous courses and prescribed curricula that the current reports differ most from the reports of the 1970s and resemble more the proposals of earlier times.

The key words regarding curriculum in the 1970 reports were *electives, options,* and *alternatives.* The Kettering Commission, for example, proposed that "the variety of alternative schools in American education will be limited only by the legitimate needs of adolescents and the vivacity of the imagination of educational planners" (Brown, 1973, p. 101). With respect to the content of secondary education the Kettering Commission had this to say:

> Planning for the content of secondary education has been a fragmented process which too often has reflected the competing concerns of subject areas. The result has been the perpetuation of programs and subject areas whose retention has been rationalized as traditional or as "needed" to meet college entrance requirements. The reform of secondary education will be meaningless unless the focus of change in content becomes the needs of students rather than the desires and interests of competing members of high school staffs (pp. 40-41).

The Kettering Commission argued for a wide-ranging system of alternative programs to provide "a meaningful freedom of educational choice to every student. Every adolescent should, with proper guidance,

be able to select those forms of schooling and learning most congenial to his basic learning style, philosophic orientation, and tastes" (pp. 99-100).

The National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education (Martin, 1974) proposed to

> shift the emphasis away from the *comprehensive schools* toward *comprehensive education*, arguing that the confines of one building are no longer enough to contain all the valuable and necessary experiences of today's young person. What is needed is greater diversity in formal education which reflects the actual diversity of the learning situations and the variety of experience that living in today's world demands (p. 8).

The reports of the 1970s gave considerable attention to informal education as well as education in nonschool settings. Academic credits were to be awarded for experiences out of the classroom. The California RISE Commission (1975) recommended that learners should be permitted furloughs from school, "these furloughs should be of flexible duration, of educational value to the learner, and consistent with the learner's needs and objectives" (p. 11).

The 1983 reports take a completely different approach. The Education Commission of the States (1983), for example, recommends that states and local districts "establish firm, explicity and demanding requirements concerning discipline, attendance, homework, grades and other essentials of effective schooling and that parents be enlisted in the education process in ways that are not now sufficiently widespread" (p. 38). The Commission's Task Force urged a "strengthening" of the curriculum from kindergarten through grade twelve with a goal of providing "richer substance and greater motivational power; to eliminate 'soft,' non-essential courses; to involve students more enthusiastically in learning; and to encourage mastery skills beyond the basics—problem-solving, analysis, interpretation and persuasive writing, for example" (p. 38).

The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) was even more specific, recommending that

> State and local high school graduation requirements be strengthened and that, *at a minimum*, all students seeking a diploma be required to lay foundations in the Five New Basics by taking the following curriculum during their 4 years of high school: (a) 4 years of English; (b) 3 years of mathematics; (c) 3 years of science; (d) 3 years of social studies; and (e) one-half year of computer science. For the college-bound, 2 years of foreign language in high school are strongly recommended in addition to those taken earlier (p. 24).

In its "implementing recommendations," the National Commission

provides rather general statements of what it means "by the essentials of a strong curriculum" in each of the subject areas. Beyond its New Basics, the Commission proposes that study of a foreign language begin in the elementary schools since four to six years is required for minimal proficiency. The high school curriculum should also include "programs requiring rigorous effort in subjects that advance students' personal, educational, and occupational goals, such as fine and performing arts and vocational education" (p. 26). The elementary school curriculum should be designed to provide the sound base for study of the New Basics at the high school level, fostering "an enthusiasm for learning and the development of the individual's gifts and talents" (p. 27).

As Chester E. Finn, Jr. (1983) has pointed out, the Five New Basics are hardly new:

> Every good high school in the country recommends the very same package of courses to its college-bound students and has done so for decades. Every good college likes its entrants to bring such an educational background with them. Every savvy parent wants his or her youngster to acquire the skills and knowledge implicit in such a high school transcript. The only new entry is the proposed half year of computer science, an altogether timely and reasonable addition for those who will spend most of their adult years living in the 21st century (p. 28).

If the New Basics curriculum was essentially the old college-preparatory curriculum, the question is raised as to its appropriateness for those who are not college bound. Ninety years ago at a time when only a small fraction of youth went on to college, the Committee of Ten argued that while high school was terminal education for most students, preparation for college was really the best preparation for life for all students (Committee on Secondary School Studies, 1893). A National Center for Educational Statistics (1983) study found that fewer than 3 percent of 1982 high school graduates met the National Commission's academic requirements. Leaving out the computer science requirement, fewer than half of the graduates met a three years of mathematics requirement and only a third met the foreign language requirement.

The issue of higher standards and more rigorous courses for all, particularly the students not bound for college, opens up again issues concerning relevance and appropriateness of curriculum. Adler, Goodlad and others who recommend no differentiation argue, as Finn (1983) does:

> To consign the "non-college" students to a less rigorous academic education is to sentence them to second-class citizenship, and to condone the perpetuation of social inequality . . . . If we regard secondary education as preparation for full-fledged participation in American society, then we must

> expect every future citizen to acquire the cognitive skills, knowledge, values and competencies that are needed for successful participation in our complex modern culture, polity, and economy (p. 28).

This issue of a common curriculum is one with a very long history. The development of differentiated curricula and the emergence of elective courses was based on the position that to insist on all students taking what came to be viewed as the academic college preparatory curriculum was to doom large numbers of students to a second-class citizenship, to failure, and to leaving school without appropriate skills and knowledge for either work or adult living.

In his *Paideia Proposal* (1982), Adler argues that a politically classless democratic society calls for a "one-track system of schooling, not a system with two or more tracks, only one of which goes straight ahead while others shunt the young off to sidetracks not headed toward the goals our society opens to all" (p. 5). The *Paideia Proposal* calls for the same educational objectives for all and the same course of study for all throughout 12 years of basic schooling, the only exception being the choice of a second language, English being the first language for all. Adler's common curriculum involves three different modes of learning and different modes of teaching corresponding to the "three different ways in which the mind can be improved:"

- *By acquisition of organized knowledge.* Three areas of subject matter—language, literature, and fine arts: mathematics and natural sciences; history, geography, and social sciences with didactics as the prime mode of instruction.
- *By the development of intellectual skills.* Linguistic, mathematical, and scientific skills with coaching, exercise, and supervised practice as the prime modes of instruction.
- *By the enlargement of understanding, insight, and aesthetic appreciation.* Discussion of books and other works of art and involvement in artistic activities such as music, drama, and visual arts, using Socratic questioning and active participation as the prime modes of instruction.

Curriculum also includes auxiliary studies: Physical education, health, manual activities, and career orientation (not vocational training).

Goodlad (1983) has much to say about curriculum. His study indicated that both parents and professionals wanted more from the schools than is found in the phrase "intellectual development." In addition to a reasonable balance between four sets of goals—intellectual, social, vocational, and personal—there was a concern for the ambiance of the school expresed in terms of the school as a caring, nurturing environment. Goodlad's data revealed "not only curricular dominance of English/language arts and mathematics but also consistent and repetitive attention to basic facts and skills" (p. 236). However, the study found too great an emphasis on possession of information as compared with an understanding of its

implications and applications. There is, Goodlad believes, a "preoccupation with lower intellectual processes" and a "failure to differentiate and see relationships between facts and the more important concepts facts help us to understand" (p. 237).

Goodlad is concerned about curricular balance and rejects both university entrance requirements and state requirements of specific years of study for subjects in each field. Goodlad returns to the Harvard Report, *General Education in a Free Society* with its "'five fingers' of human knowledge and experience," and recommends that the students' time be devoted as follows: up to 18 percent to language and literature; up to 18 percent to mathematics and science; up to 15 percent each to society and social studies, the arts, and the vocations. The remaining 10 percent would be available for guided individual choice. Goodlad sees problems resulting from "the confusion of ends and means and the haphazard curriculum development and improvement" prevalent in most schools.

Expressing serious reservations about the tendency to simply getting tough, raising standards, and otherwise drawing in educational reins, Goodlad sees two fundamental principles which should guide long-term curriculum improvement efforts: (1) the provision of general education as the primary role of elementary and secondary education, means that curricular deficiencies must be understood in terms of what constitutes good general education and (2) judicious pedagogical provisions must be made for individual differences in the student population. Goodlad proposes a common curriculum which would consist of a common set of concepts, principles, skills, and ways of knowing aimed at providing a good general education for all. In his view, the best preparation for work is found in a sound general education.

In *High School,* Boyer (1983) lays out his curriculum priorities, "not to impose a single curriculum on every school, but to underscore the point that what is taught in school determines what is learned" (p. 84). His first curriculum priority is language, specifically mastery of English. He proposes that "every student . . . should learn to write more clearly, read with greater comprehension, listen with more discrimination, speak with more precision, and, through critical thinking, develop the capacity to apply old knowledge to new concepts" (p. 89). To achieve mastery, Boyer would have courses in writing and speech with not more than 20 students per class.

Boyer's second curriculum priority is "a core of common learning—a program of required courses in literature, the arts, foreign language, history, civics, science, mathematics, technology, health—to extend the knowledge and broaden the perspective of every student" (p. 94). He defines the basic curriculum for all students as "a study of those consequential ideas, experiences, and traditions common to all of us by virtue of our membership in the human family at a particular moment in history. These shared experiences include our use of symbols, our sense of history, our membership in groups and institutions, our relationship to nature, our

need for well-being, and our growing dependence on technology" (p. 95).

Boyer sees these themes based, in part, on the traditional academic subjects, but argues that they are appropriate for all students, not just the college bound. He warns, however, that "beefing up traditional academic courses while essential, is not sufficient." Present instructional programs are too compartmentalized and fragmented. Consequently, beyond tightening up requirements, Boyer suggests that "we must bring a new interdisciplinary vision into the classroom and the total program of the school. The content of the core curriculum must extend beyond the specialties to touch larger, more transcendent issues" (p. 115). He recommends that all seniors be required to complete a Senior Independent Project: "a written report that focuses on a significant contemporary issue, one that draws upon the various fields of academic study that have made up the student's program" and for which they will receive a half unit of credit (p. 115).

The curriculum Boyer proposes would also include a carefully planned program of "elective clusters" which give students an opportunity to pursue their particular aptitudes and interests. He recommends that the last two years of high school become a "transition school" in which students would devote half the time to the common core and the other half to the elective clusters. The clusters would include five or six courses which would enable the student to engage in advanced study in selected academic subjects or explore career options or a combination of both. The clusters "might range from health service to the arts, from computers to science, from mathematics or a foreign language to office management," providing either quality vocational offerings or enriched academic study (p. 128). An essential ingredient is an adequate system of guidance and counseling, with no more than 100 students per counselor.

The final component of Boyer's curriculum is what he calls "the New Carnegie Unit"—a minimum of 30 hours a year of voluntary service in the community or at school. Citing the National Panel on High Schools and Adolescent Education report (1974) which depicted schools "as the social 'aging vats' that have isolated adolescents and delayed their learning adult roles, work habits, and skills," Boyer sees such volunteer service activities as teaching student values—"to help all students understand that to be fully human one must serve" (p. 215).

The Twentieth Century Fund Task Force (1983) has recommendations concerning curriculum and instruction as well. The report recommends that the development of literacy in the English language be declared the most important objective of education by the federal government. Federal funds now going to bilingual education should be "used to teach non-English-speaking children how to speak, read, and write English" (p. 12). The Task Force would like every student to acquire proficiency in a second language but recognizes that long neglect of foreign languages in the United States will require intensive teacher training and curriculum development efforts. The Task Force also recommends that the federal government support programs aimed at developing basic scientific literacy

for all and providing advanced training in mathematics and science in the high schools. The report states that "schools must go beynd the teaching of basic science to give adequate training in advanced science and mathematics to a large enough number of students to ensure that there are ample numbers capable of filling the increased number of jobs demanding these skills" (p. 14).

In making proposals for new federal efforts to stimulate improvement of education in America, the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force urges that such efforts are not made at the expense of the handicapped or the disadvantaged. The Task Force believes that federal programs for the poor and handicapped should be continued and, moreover, that the federal government should pay for all categorical programs it requires.

The College Board's Educational EQuality Project (1983) is based on the belief that "in recent years, many college entrants have not had the knowledge and skills needed for higher education" (p. 1). Its report is aimed at informing students on what they need to know and what they need to be able to do. Upgrading the academic preparation of students, the report states, "is necessary to fulfill our national promise of equal access to higher education." Based on the judgments of hundreds of high school and college educators from 2,500 member institutions, consensus was reached on academic preparation required for college success.

The Project identified the basic academic competencies, the broad intellectual skills, as follows: reading, writing, speaking, and listening, mathematics, reasoning and studying plus computer competency. The basic academic subjects needed for effective college work are identified as: English, the arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign languages. Each of the subject areas is discussed in terms of why preparation in that area is important and what college entrants need to know and need to be able to do in that subject area. The subjects are the traditional college preparatory subjects, of course, and the publication is aimed at having more students better prepared. As the report points out: "We will all be well served if educational excellence can be made possible, not just for the few, but for all students" (p. 2). Again, a college preparatory program is best for all.

In *Action for Excellence* (1983), the Education Commission of the States points out that more than a decade has elapsed since intensive efforts were made to revitalize the nation's science curriculum and many of the teaching materials developed then have become obsolete. What is needed, the report states, is a renewed curriculum: "But we must take care to develop teaching materials aimed at attracting, motivating and establishing competency in every ability group. A concept of curriculum improvement that focuses on cognitive goals but ignores motivation is destined to fail" (p. 27). The report urges the launching of "energetic efforts to *strengthen the curriculum* from kindergarten through high school" by eliminating soft, nonessential courses, encouraging mastery of skills beyond the basics, and enlivening and improving instruction.

Sizer (1984) believes that "education's job today is less in purveying

information than in helping people to use it—that is in the exercise of their minds" (p. 84). The two purposes of the school are education of the intellect and education in character. Sizer believes there is a set of skills, reading, writing, speaking, listening, measuring, estimating, calculating, seeing, which together with the basic modes of imagining and of reasoning should be at the core of high-school work.

Sizer would organize a high school into four areas or large departments: (1) inquiry and expression, (2) mathematics and science, (3) literature and the arts, and (4) philosophy and history. Rather than award a high school diploma on the basis of years of attendance and the collection of credits, Sizer proposes that the diploma be granted when a student reaches an agreed-upon level of mastery.

The National Science Board's Commission on Precollege Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology (1983) proposes what it calls "sweeping and drastic change: in the breadth of student participation, in our methods and quality of teaching, in the preparation and motiviation of our children, in the content of our courses, and in the standards of achievement" (pp. v-vi). The Commission observes that improvements in mathematics and science could not really be separated from such other subjects as English, history, and foreign languages and hopes that other groups would correct the "glaring deficiencies" in those areas.

The Commission spells out in some detail what is needed in the way of redesigned educational objectives and related curricula and instruction in mathematics, science, and technology, beginning in the kindergarten and going through twelfth grade, emphasizing "'hands-on' experience, disciplined and rigorous study, and a substantial amount of time-on-task and home work at all levels" (p. vii). Suggestions for course topics and criteria for selection are made under headings involving the mathematical sciences, the natural sciences, and technology, kindergarten through twelfth grade, and a plea is made that "teachers of mathematics, the natural and social sciences, technology, of reading and writing, history, English and the arts, will seize the numerous opportunities to demonstrate the interdependence of human knowledge and encourage students to apply the skills and concepts from one discipline in seeking solutions in others" (p. 93).

The Southern Regional Board's Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools (1983) notes that while students complain that the senior year in high school offers no challenge, colleges must provide remedial communication and quantitative skills education. It sees "the heritage of the Sixties, when high schools reacted to the general demand for 'relevance' by expanding the curriculum with elective . . . from movie making to driver education" continuing to characterize high school offerings. And, while it views positively mandatory legislative initiatives calling for minimal competencies as determined by testing, the Task Force is concerned lest minimums become norms. Competition among colleges for students has resulted in lowering of standards: "Slackened admission standards by colleges that no longer require a foreign language, a rigorous mathematics-

science sequence, or any evidence of what the applicant's class standing is, send no signals to high school students that the academics are important" (p. 18). The Task Force recommended that the state boards of education and of higher education establish joint committees "to consider concerted action to establish and raise standards for the high school curriculum as well as for the general education component of higher education;" that state boards of education review high school course offerings in order to strengthen the major field requirements, "preventing the acceptance of peripheral courses to count for major subject requirements, and recommending repeal of legislatively mandated courses outside the major subjects; that college and university admission standards be raised" (pp. 19-20).

Goodlad (1983) sees the current press for curriculum reform as follows:

> The "obvious" and "logical" solutions to the schools' curriculur inadequacies being bandied about today are those that were most frequently bandied about yesterday and the day before that. Essentially, they involve a "get tough" approach combined with a dose of elitism:. Course requirements in basic subjects are to be extended; textbooks are to become "harder," with less watering down to the lowest common denominators of student abilities (p. 291).

In many ways, curricular proposals in the current reports are reminiscent of similar calls made periodically in the past. They represent another swing of the pendulum and a reviving of curricular and instructional issues which have recurred almost regularly. In his 1955 publication entitled *The Restoration of Learning*, Bestor argued: "An educational philosophy is both anti-intellectual and anti-democratic if it asserts that sound training in the fundamental intellectual disciplines is appropriate only for the minority of students who are preparing for college and the professions, and if it proposes to deprive the rest of the children of our people of such training by substituting programs that minimize intellectual aims" (p. 8).

The philosophical position expressed by Adler in the *Paideia Proposal* is essentially the same as that of Bestor. The issues raised by the current reports are traditional curricular issues and now are being answered with what may be called the traditionalist position. Is there a common curriculum required of all students? What are the elements of such a common curriculum? Recognizing the existence of a variety of individual differences, to what extent if any should there be curricular differentiation to take these into account? Is the college preparatory curriculum—recognizing that such a curriculum has different definitions—appropriate for all students, including those who are not college bound? Does the secondary school have an obligation to provide vocational education opportunites and ensure that students leave high school with what Conant

called "marketable skills?" The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) described secondary school curricula as "homogenized, diluted, and diffused to the point that they no longer have a central purpose. In effect, we have a cafeteria-style curriculum in which the appetizers and the desserts can easily be mistaken for the main courses" (p. 18). In this "curricular smorgasbord, combined with extensive student choice," which elements constitute the main courses and which, the appetizers and desserts? Are they the same for all students? Has the whole concept of "compensatory education" of the past two decades been a mistake? Need we only have raised the standards, toughened the requirements, mandated Five New Basics to reverse the patterns of educational underachievement which have been of such concern to educators and laypersons alike?

Two other related topics are dealt with in some reports which are related to curriculum and instruction—tracking and vocational education. Both of these topics are controversial and yet there is surprising consensus among several reports which examine the questions and take positions.

Tracking

Goodlad (1983) discusses the question of tracking and ability grouping from the point of view of access to knowledge. He defines tracking as "an organizational arrangement by means of which students observed to be making varied progress in school are grouped so as to reduce the apparent range of achievement and performance in any one group" (p. 150). Marked increases in high school attendance, together with increased diversity of the student population, resulted in tracking and ability grouping becoming "widely practiced by educators as a device for endeavoring to reduce the range of differences in a class and therefore the difficulty and complexity of the teaching task" (p. 151).

Research on ability grouping and tracking has been done for at least the past 75 years but the findings continue to be equivocal. The arguments pro and con grouping have been rehearsed for years, sometimes citing research and sometimes simply expressing beliefs or convictions.

Boyer (1983) notes that many curricular decisions "are shaped *most* decisively perhaps by the program or 'track' in which the student is enrolled—academic, vocational or general" (p. 79). The academic program/track is the most rigorous, contains the most traditional academic subjects, and prepares students for further education. The general program/track has few academic courses and provides many elective courses from which to chose. The vocational track serves students who plan to join the work force when they leave school; these students take some academic courses as well as vocational courses.

Goodlad (1983) reviews the grouping and tracking practices in the schools he studied and concludes that such practices preclude equal access to knowledge, especially for the poor and minority children who are relegated to inferior tracks. Goodlad sees tracking practices as creating the myth that there are basically two kinds of people: those who are "head

oriented" and those who are "hand oriented." In the secondary school, the latter are found in the vocational or general tracks. He found that grouping affected the students' self-concepts adversely. His general conclusion is that the 38 schools

> received children differentially ready for learning, educated them differentially and graduated them differentially prepared for further education, employment, and, presumably, vocational and social mobility. The 17,163 students in our sample had quite different opportunities to gain access to knowledge during their years of schooling. At least some of these differences in opportunity to learn, it appears, were differentially associated with economic status and racial identification (p. 160).

Goodlad argues that grouping/tracking practices are justified "by resorting, on one hand, to the myth of inevitable and irrevocable human variability and, on the other, to the popular rhetoric of providing for individual differences in learning." The former, he believes, leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy and the latter to giving up on many individual students (p. 165). He would eliminate tracking, suggesting as one alternative, "mastery learning which emphasizes a combination of large-group instruction and small-group peer tutoring" (p. 296). At the secondary school level, Goodlad recommends "a common core of studies from which students cannot escape through electives, even though the proposed elective purport to be in the same domain of knowledge," elimination of grouping students in separate classes on the basis of past performance, random assignment of students to heterogeneous classes—all aimed at "offering the most equity with respect to gaining access to knowledge while still preserving the more advantageous content and teaching practices of the upper tracks" (pp. 297-298). What is needed, Goodlad concludes, is improved pedagogy, not differentiated, inequitable tracks and curricula.

Adler (1982) also sees a multitrack system as "an abominable discrimination" aiming at different goals for different groups of children. The *Paideia Proposal* advocates the same educational objectives for all, the same course of study for all, and the completion of "this required course of study with a satisfactory standard of accomplishment regardless of native ability, temperamental bent, or conscious preferences" (p. 41). Adler's means for adjusting for individual differences is to administer the program "sensitively and flexibly in ways that accord with whatever differences must be taken into account" (p. 44). He would provide true remedial assistance where needed and would recognize that some children need more time and more help than others. As for the gifted, Adler argues that the quality of the Paideia curriculum is such that programs for the gifted are unnecessary.

Boyer (1983) also recommends a single track and the abolition of the three-

track academic, vocational, and general system. He advocates one track which provides a general education for all students, together with a pattern of electives which keep options open for all students for both further education and work. Boyer predicts that by the year 2000, twelve years of schooling will not be enough and that education will be lifelong. His curriculum proposal is for a single track which will lead to continuing education options. He sees students tackling the core courses in different ways although the basic content of the core courses would be the same for all.

In his Carnegie report on the comprehensive high school, Conant (1959) took a very different position from Boyer: "In the required subjects and those elected by students with a wide range of ability, the students should be grouped according to ability, subject by subject" (p. 49). Conant suggested that there be at least three types of classes: one for the large group whose ability was about average, one for the more able, and one for slow readers who were to be handled by special teachers. He opposed "across-the-board grouping to which a given student is placed in a particular section in *all* courses" (p. 49). Thus, Conant was opposed to tracking but supported ability grouping in subjects where there was likely to be a broad spectrum of ability and achievement, such as English, American history, algebra, and biology.

The arguments pro and con ability grouping and tracking have been rehearsed for a good many years and the issues have not been resolved by the research conducted for some 75 years. The grouping issues have loomed large in the equity debates. Surveys have consistently shown that grouping and tracking are practiced widely at all levels and that teachers and administrators have deep convictions about the efficacy of grouping. Elimination of tracking and establishment of one track for all as advocated by some of the reformers calls for considerable staff and curriculum development to enable schools to deal with individual differences, real or only perceived. There has been attention given to the development of flexible groupings and strategies for individualizing instruciton but the recommendation to eliminate grouping will be a difficult one to implement simply by mandate.

The Gifted

Related to grouping and tracking practices is the concern for the education of the gifted and talented, since such programs and classes often use some form of grouping. In the case of Adler's *Paedeia Proposal*, the objectives and the courses of study are the same for all and there should be no special provisions for the gifted. Calculus, which represents advanced study in mathematics in many programs for the gifted, is to be studied by all in Adler's proposal. Boyer, (1983) on the other hand, recommends the elimination of all tracking but concludes "that every high school should have special arrangements for gifted students—credit by examination, independent study, or special study with universities" (p. 238). In large urban areas, Boyer recommends that magnet schools be

established in the arts or science to develop the gifted and talented students in those fields. Finally, Boyer proposes establishing a network of Residential Academies in Science and Mathematics and in other fields such as foreign languages and the arts throughout the nation. "Special arrangements" and residential schools are usually considered a form of grouping as are advanced electives.

The National Science Board's Commission, like several other reports, clearly states that its "plan is not only for the affluent or gifted. While it provides the quality and intensity of education needed to continue their development, it also addresses the needs and potential of all other students" (1983, p. vi). Unlike the proposals which emerged after Sputnik when the focus was on identifying the brightest and the most able to meet the nation's need for specialized manpower resources, the 1983 reports stress the notion that "excellence and elitism are not synonymous" and that "the Nation should reaffirm its commitment to full opportunity and full achievement by all" (p. vii). The College Board's Educational EQuality Project (1983) deals with "what college entrants need to know and be able to do" and does not discuss any advanced preparation (including its own Advanced Placement Program). It leaves it to the high schools to decide on curriculum and organization in the context of their own resources.

Vocational Education

An effective education-work policy was one of the consistent themes of the 1970 reports. The Panel on Youth of the President's Science Advisory Committee (Coleman, 1974) focused its report, *Youth: Transition to Adulthood,* on alternate programs for mixing education and work. The U.S. Office of Education panel recommended that all youth be provided with real-jobs-with-real-work through programs that would emphasize job-knowledge, on-the-job training, and occupational citizenship. The National Manpower Institute included in its many recommendations the concept that actual work or service experience become an integral part of all youth education. Although the Vocational Education Act of 1963 had encouraged major reconsideration of the nature and quality of vocational education, the programs continued to be controversial, as much for what they did as what they did not do.

Vocational educators and others have indicated concerns about the treatment, or more accurately, the lack of treatment, of vocational education in the reform reports of the 1980s. Some of the reports omit mention of vocational education entirely while others give it very little attention. There is some concern among educators and lay persons that increasing the requirements for graduation and mandating a common core curriculum for all leaves little or no time for vocational education. Adler (1982, p. 18) argues that there is no place for specialized or particularized job training in the common school and that the common course of study with its general/liberal and nonspecialized nonvocational characteristics "is truly vocational in the sense that it aims to prepare children for the

three vocations or callings common to all." In Adler's view, the techniques and technology of most work is best done on the job. The National Commission on Excellence in Education makes no mention of vocational or career education.

Boyer (1983) describes vocational education as an unfulfilled promise: "Many factors have caused us to doubt the value of traditional vocational education" (p. 121). Among the factors is a tenuous link to job opportunities. Boyer cites a study which found that "job prospects for graduates of vocational programs are not much better, overall, than they are for students in the nonspecialized curriculum" (p. 121). Vocational education programs are limited due to lack of up-to-date and adequate resources and an inability to keep up with shifting labor-market patterns. The most serious problem, Boyer observes, is that vocational education students are too often short-changed academically: "Job training is being acquired at the high cost of quality education. And options for the future are restricted" (p. 123). Goodlad (1983) makes a similar observation in *A Place Called School:*

> A student concentrating on academic subjects but wishing to enroll in vocational electives does not necessarily have a broad choice. He or she often discovers that a desired course is not available at the time wanted or that a prerequisite must be taken first. Similarly, a student with a heavy vocational concentration encounters difficulties in lining up academic subjects. Some schools in our sample got around this problem by scheduling sections of academic courses specifically for vocational students. The net effect of this was, of course, to separate even further the two sides of the academic/vocational division (p. 144).

Boyer found the most successful programs at specialized vocational schools, not comprehensive high schools. However, in those schools where the vocational programs were strong, the academic offerings were often weak. Boyer, as pointed out earlier, recommends a single track for all and the elimination of the vocational track. While eliminating the vocational track, Boyer would not abolish vocational courses:

> What we would eliminate are discriminatory labels and a tracking pattern that assume some students need no further education and that cut off their future options. We would also eliminate the narrow "marketable" skills courses that have little intellectual substance, courses that give students "hands-on" experience while denying them a decent education (p. 127).

In addition to English literacy and the core of common learning, Boyer recommends that the last two years of high school be considered a "transi-

tion school" with half the program devoted to "elective clusters" which would include exploration of career options.

Among other concerns Goodlad (1983) expresses about vocational education is the fact "that poor and minority students were disproportionately represented in *vocational* training classes" (p. 343). Goodlad was depressed by the anachronistic nature of much of the training—training for the mechanical age recently jumped over by the technological" (p. 344). Like Boyer, Goodlad would have students involved in a common curriculum which would provide them with equal access to knowledge plus the "development of a mature perspective on careers, career choice, and bases of career decision making" (p. 344). Goodlad calls for

> collaboration of school and elements of the workplace in assuring a broad career perspective for every student. This would occur primarily in the vocational/career domain of the curriculum and would replace training in and for specific jobs. Visits would be accompanied by extensive reading, writing, and discussion. Industrial, business and professional representatives would participate in and out of classrooms. After careful examination, students would select sites for internship-type experiences in a limited number of vocations (p. 345).

Like Boyer's proposal for a "new Carnegie unit" which would involve service to the community or school, Goodlad proposes "a fourth phase in the educational/schooling continuum . . . a combination of work, study, and service conducted within an educational ethos" (p. 347). This phase would be heavily experiential in its orientation and with considerable individual and group counseling. The function of this phase, "whether one or two years for all, is to ease the education-work transition, on the one hand, and to strengthen the work-study-service combination as a desirable condition, on the other" (p. 348).

Implicitly or explicitly, the 1983 reports seem to call for major changes in vocational education: in the student population served, the curriculum and instruction provided, and the site of such education. By proposing a common core curriculum with few electives or options, several reformers are asserting that a sound general/liberal education is the best vocational/specialized education at the secondary school level, that all students need career orientation but not job-specific training at this level, that career orientation is best undertaken in experiential-based internship-type programs, and that equity is better achieved through such approaches than through vocational training which creates a second- or third-class citizenry. Vocational educators, while accepting some elements of such an argument, believe that such proposals are dangerous and inequitable. Some educators argue that it is the vocational program which keeps a large number of high school students in school and which provides them with meaningful

academic experiences. Others argue that such training is useless and deceptive and that all students should have a rigorous academic experience and to assume that some are not capable of engaging in such an experience is to demean a sizeable part of the population as being uneducable. This area of controversy suffers, unfortunately, from a good many doctrinaire positions, just as does discussion about grouping and tracking.

Technology

The term *technology* figures prominently in several reports but there are significant differences in the concerns and the recommendations concerning technology. The National Science Board's Commission (1983) began its report by asserting that the United States had "dramatically and boldly led the world into the age of technology" but was now failing to nurture its children and youth in the intellectual tools needed for the coming decades. It couples "mathematics, science and technology" as new basics in which all students need a firm grounding. The Commission dealt with technology in curricular and instructional as well as resource terms. With respect to the latter, the report pointed out:

> Computers are revolutionizing many areas of our lives; they may well do the same for education. They and other new technologies offer the potential to work patiently with every student, regardless of level or sophistication. They also offer a means to relieve teachers of much of the drudgery of routine exercise and record keeping. Furthermore, computers offer a wealth of interactive learning resources, including access to word processing, data bases, graphic capabilities and a host of related means to expand students' learning potential (p. xii).

The National Science Board Commission links science and technology and states that: "Students must be prepared to understand technological innovation, the productivity of technology, the impact of products of technology, and the need for critical evaluation of societal matters involving the consequences of technology" (p. 44). In its "Suggestions for Course Topics and Criteria for Selection," the Commission describes student outcomes for computing skills "differentiated for those students who may be particularly interested in computing or will pursue careers in scientific and technical areas and for those students with other interests and abilities" (p. 100). The Commission recommends that instruction in technology be integrated into the K-12 curriculum, recognizing that "this will require a major emphasis on the development of new teaching materials and on the training of teachers to enable them to handle technological concepts" (p. 101). Its supplementary volume, *Source Materials*, has a section titled, "Educational Technology—Definition and Domain" which discusses the computer, educational television, computer-based telecommunications, videodisc systems and robotics as technologies currently available and at "the leading edge of the technological

revolution."

In *High School*, Boyer (1983) deals with technology as "extending the teacher's reach." Looking briefly at developments since the early 1950s, Boyer observes that educators with long memories will "recall that virtually every new piece of hardware introduced into the schools in the past three decades has been oversold, misused, and eventually discarded" (p. 187). The so-called "technological breakthroughs" simply languish in closets. This is so, Boyer believes, because the hardware has always been better than the software. Boyer recommends that the Secretary of Education appoint a national commission to include outstanding classroom teachers "to evaluate the quality of computer software being prepared for classroom instruction" and that the commission's recommendations be made available to the schools (p. 192).

One of the reasons technology revolutions have bypassed schools, Boyer argues, is that classroom teachers have been bypassed in the process. He recommends that teachers be educated regarding technology and its uses and that 10 Technology Resource Centers be set up across the country to demonstrate the latest technology, giving "top priority to the development of regional networks to provide computerized library service to all schools" (p. 194). Boyer recommends that the priorities to be followed in decisions about purchasing computers should be: (1) learning *about* computers, (2) learning *with* computers, and (3) learning *from* computers. In addition to computers, Boyer suggests attention to cable television, video disks and cassettes, and related technology which can be fit appropriately into the curriculum. As Boyer puts it: "The potential of technology is to free teachers from the rigidity of the syllabus and tap the imaginations of both teacher and student to an extent that has never been possible before" (p. 200).

The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) includes a half-year of computer science as one of its recommended New Basics. This course should result in students being equipped to: "(a) understand the computer as an information, computation, and communication device; (b) use the computer in the study of the other Basics and for personal and work-related purposes, and (c) understand the world of computers, electronics, and related technologies" (p. 26). With respect to new instructional materials, the Commission believes they "should reflect the most current applications of technology in appropriate curriculum areas" (p. 29).

The College Board's Educational EQuality Project (1983) observes that "a revolution in communications and information technology is making the computer a basic tool for acquiring knowledge, organizing systems, and solving problems. As such it is having a profound influence on learning and on the world of work" (p. 11). Consequently, in its discussion of what students need to know and to be able to do, the Project has added computer competency to the basic academic competencies. Students entering college, the Project recommends, should have basic knowledge about how computers work; some ability to use the computer and appro-

priate software for self-instruction, collecting and retrieving information, word-processing, modeling and simulations, and problem-solving; an awareness of when and how computers can be used in daily life as well as in study and work; and some understanding of the problems individuals and society confront in using computers, including ethical considerations (pp. 11-12).

Goodlad's observers' reports caused him to ask: "How did almost all of [the schools] manage to shield themselves so effectively from the technological revolution now well underway? The common absence of modern technology will play in the instructional process is still not well defined but he is certain that "technology increasingly will provide educational the educative process." (1983, p. 227). Goodlad believes that children and youth must become functionally literate in their understanding and use of computers "as a necessity, not a frill." Goodlad argues tha the role technology will play in the instructional process is still not well defined but he is certain that "technology increasingly will provide educational delivery systems, however, whether inside or outside of schools" (p. 341). Goodlad points out:

> the advent of technology has added to the array of educating agencies and institutions, rearranging what once was a triad of home, church and school. Just how the products of technology have added to and taken away from the educational role of the traditional institutions is not yet clear. But we do know that any consideration of education beyond schools must encompass the educating being done and capable of being done by the new media of communication (pp. 342-343).

The Education Commission of the States' Task Force (1983) asserted that advances in technology will have a significant effect on both job requirements and job opportunities. In their view, "real opportunity, real changes for upward mobility, will increasingly be reserved for those with 'learning-to-learn' skills: not just the ability to read, write and compute at a minimal level, but more complex skills of problem solving, reasoning, conceptualizing and analyzing" (p. 16). The Commission's Task Force includes computer literacy competencies in its list of basic skills and competencies for productive employment, drawing heavily on those of the College Board's Educational EQuality Project. Included in the competencies is "the ability to understand the basic functions of a computer device (terminal, CRT, etc.)" (p. 50).

Adler and the Paideia Group "embrace" the new technologies believing that since computers will soon be found in many homes and work places they should also be present in schools and classrooms as well. Adler (1983) sees computers as especially effective tools for the development of intellectual skills (Column Two of the Paideia Proposal), anticipating "a time when every student will have his or her own individual mechanical

'coach'" (p. 41). He also sees video tapes as helpful in Column One learning providing effective and arresting lectures. However, Adler reasserts his continuing opposition to any kind of particularized job training: "Endorsing the educational use of technological devices of every kind does not mean that we approve of their use in basic schooling in order to train students for careers as computer programmers, as computer technicians, or for any othe narrowly vocational purpose" (p. 41).

The Business-Higher Education Forum (1983) was concerned with postsecondary education and observed that education was an essential ingredient in technological innovation and economic competitiveness. Asserting that "American workers are the single most valuable economic resource the United States possesses," the Forum urged the development of a national strategy for education, training, and retraining at all levels (p. 20). Computer-related skills "will be increasingly necessary not only in offices and factories, but in schools and homes as well" (p. 21).

Thus, the reports seem to agree on the need for computer literacy (defined in various ways) as part of basic education for all, on developing computer career competencies for some, and on the helpfulness of various new technologies as a means of extending instruction. As Boyer (1983) puts it—learning about, learning with, and learning from computers. Goodlad and other writers are critical about the ways new technologies are used, not used, or misused in classrooms and schools. There seems to be some consensus that computer literacy is a necessity for all, but the notion of what constitutes computer literacy differs and, in some of the reports, is quite vague. With respect to computer-related careers for a high-tech society, there is far less consensus and even a good deal of debate as to the needs and opportunities for careers in industry and commerce and the levels of education and training required for various kinds of computer-related careers. This is hardly reflected in the many reports. The imminence of a high-tech society is accepted but the vision of what that means for education and training seems to be clouded despite the enthusiastic pronouncements in a number of reports. There seems to be agreement that computers and video-discs represent effective instructional resources but there are concerns that these new technologies will be misused or inappropriately used as were the new technologies of the past. Various aspects of technology constitute a theme found in many of the reports.

Use of Time

The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) presented its findings and recommendations concerning *time* as one of the four important aspects of the educational process. Concerning the use of time in schools and by students, the Commission pointed to three "disturbing facts": "(1) compared to other nations, American students spend much less time on school work; (2) time spent in the classroom and on homework is often used ineffectively; and (3) schools are not doing enough to help students develop either the study skills required to use time well or the

willingness to spend more time on school work" (p. 21).

The Commission cites "England and other industrialized countries" as having much longer school days (8 hours as compared to 6 in the U.S.A.) and longer school years (220 days as compared with 180 in the United States). While there may well have been changes in the last few years, the instructional time per day and per year at the primary and secondary levels reported by 19 countries in an International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) study based on self-reports by IEA national technical officers gives a very different picture of discrepancies between the United States and other industrialized nations in terms of instructional hours and instructional days per year (Passow *et al.* 1976, pp. 260-267). The Commission also cited a California study which reported that due to poor classroom management of classroom time, some primary school students received only one-fifth of the instruction in reading comprehension that others did. Also, the Commission pointed to the "haphazard and unplanned" teaching of study skills which results in students leaving schools "without disciplined and systematic study habits."

The Commission's recommendation is that "significantly more time be devoted to learning the New Basics. This will require more effective use of the existing school day, a longer school day, or a lengthened school year" (p. 29). Specifically, the Commission proposes that high school students be assigned more homework, more attention be given to instruction in effective study and work skills, school days be lengthened to 7 hours and the school year to 200-220 days, classroom management and school days' organization be improved, classroom discipline be improved "by considering alternative classrooms, programs, and schools to meet the needs of continually disruptive students," attendance policies be clarified and sanctions used to reduce absenteeism, and administrative burdens on teachers be reduced to provide more teaching time.

Goodlad (1983) analyzed the time available for learning in the schools he studied and found "that students varied markedly in their opportunities to learn simply because of the classrooms in which they were enrolled" (p. 96). He found considerable variability in the total number of hours spent in schools, the time devoted to particular subjects, and the time spent on instructional activities. Goodlad recommended 25 hours of instructional time per week (compared with an average of 22.5 hours currently) but pointed out that "establishing uniform time utilization target probably would be less constructive than initiating a process of improvement in each school" (p. 282). While Goodlad believes that some schools might find it necessary to increase the length of the school day, he cautions that such a step should be taken only after other adjustments in the use of time have been made. Goodlad points out: "If our interest is in quality educational experiences, we must not stop with providing *only* time. I would always choose fewer hours well used over more hours of engagement with sterile activities. Increasing the days and hours in school settings will in

fact be counter-productive unless there is, simultaneously, marked improvement in how this time is used" (p. 283).

Boyer (1983) points out that his visits to schools convinced him that simply "lengthening the school year is not a top priority for school reform. The urgent need is not more time but better use of time" (p. 232). His conclusion is that what is needed is more effective use of the time already available by providing more flexibility, by eliminating incessant interruptions, and by decreasing constant movement of students.

> The urgent need is not lengthening the school day or school year, but using the time schools already have—more time to complete a science laboratory experiment, more time to write essays and critique them, more time to engage in extended foreign language conversation. Therefore, we recommend that the class schedule be more flexibly arranged to permit larger blocks of time, especially in courses such as laboratory science, foreign language, and creative writing (pp. 232-233).

Among Sizer's five imperatives for better schools, he suggests giving "room to teachers and students to work and learn in their own appropriate ways" (1984, p. 214). Sizer would decentralize authority "to allow teachers and principals to adapt their schools to the needs, learning styles, and learning rates of their particular students" (pp. 214-215). Standardization should be avoided: "the particular needs of each student should be the only measure of how a school gets on with its business" (p. 214).

The Education Commission of the States Task Force (1983) argues that instructional time in key academic subjects must be increased. They point out that the typical elementary school week of 25 hours includes only one hour of science and less than four hours of mathematics. In contrast, the Task Force points out, in most industrialized nations

> the amount of classroom time devoted to core academic subjects is several times greater than the time spent in our schools. Students in these countries are introduced earlier than our young people to reading, mathematics, and science; they attend school longer each day and spend more days in school each year. Need we be surprised, then, that a gap is opening between achievement levels in the United States and those in Japan and Europe? (p. 28).

The Commission's Task Force urges that states "should *increase both the duration and the intensity of academic learning*" in schools. Using the existing school day to the fullest must be stressed first but states should also consider lengthening the school day and school year and extending teachers' contracts. In addition, to increase learning time, the Task Force would establish "a wider range of learning opportunities beyond the

normal school day and school year: summer institutes and after-school enrichment programs sponsored by business, for example" (p. 38).

The National Science Board Commission (1983) found that students spend insufficient time studying the academic subjects, especially mathematics, science, and technology, and far too little time with hands-on experiences in these areas. The Commission recommends

> To remedy this situation, schedules must be changed, more time must be devoted to the teaching of mathematics, science and technology, and ways must be found to use time more efficiently and effectively. Schools must become more efficient in the use of their academic day. Many nonacademic courses now offered may have to be reduced or eliminated, or ways found to teach them more efficiently and effectively, or not within the normal school day. The school day, week and/or year must be lengthened to provide the required time (p. 23).

To provide more time-on-task for studying mathematics, science and technology, the NSB Commission proposed a minimal daily allocation in grades K-6 of 60 minutes per day for mathematics and 30 minutes for science. At the junior high school level, a full year of mathematics and of science and technology is recommended. At the high school level, the Commission recommends that three years of mathematics and three years of science and technology, including a semester of computer science, be mandated at either the state or local level. If this required extending the school day, week and/or year, then that should be done.

The reports thus provide a mixture of recommendations regarding the time for instruction and schooling. Several reports recommend lengthening the school day, week, and/or year to match those of other industrialized countries, especially Japan and West Germany. Other reports argue for using present time more efficiently and effectively. In some instances, the recommendations are for extending professional time, that is, to extend the time available for curriculum development and in-service education of staff members in order to improve the use of instructional time. The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) was clearest in recommending more effective use of the school day and lengthening the school day and year. In its implementing recommendations it proposed more effective use of time by more homework, instruction in study and work skills, additional time for learners who need more instructional diversity such as the gifted and slow learners, better discipline so that learning is not interfered with, better attendance policies and reduction of absenteeism and tardiness, and "grouping of students, as well as promotion and graduation policies, should be guided by the academic progress of students and their instructional needs, rather than by rigid adherence to age" (p. 30). The National Science Board Commission recommended more mathematics, science and technology requirements

from kindergarten through grade 12 and a longer school day to enable fitting those courses in if necessary.

Recommendations concerning lengthening the school day and year are based on a misunderstanding of the concept of time-on-task. There is not a direct relationship between quantity of time and student achievement. Time-on-task is much more complicated than simply time of instruction since the content of instruction, the teaching and learning strategies, the climate or environment of instruction, individual differences—all of these—interact on effective instruction and learning and student achievement.

Moreover, if teaching and learning are as sterile, boring, ineffective, and plain poor as is stated or implied in many of the reports, it is difficult to see how lengthening the time to which students are exposed to such instruction will raise the standards of student achievement. The time-on-task research literature is not conclusive regarding the relationship that makes for achievement since the concept is a complex one in which time is only one variable. It is fairly clear from the time-on-task literature that just lengthening the time by having a longer school day or school year is insufficient and is likely to be counterproductive. This is not to say that instructional time cannot be used efficiently and effectively, that students cannot be given more opportunities for learning engagements with appropriate curriculum content, or that teaching and learning strategies cannot be improved—all with desired consequences regarding student achievement. It may be necessary to lengthen the school day or school year in order to provide desired learning experiences. For example, if requirements for graduation are increased and a curriculum balance is sought, the learning day may be lengthened. What is clear is that recommendations to add to the school day and/or school year as a means of raising standards and toughening requirements is entirely too simplistic.

Teachers and Teaching

There seems to be complete consensus that the poor quality of teachers and of teaching is a major reason for the perceived crisis in education. It is not just that there is a shortage of teachers in key subject areas such as mathematics, science, and foreign languages. Not enough teachers are academically able, teachers have been inadequately and inappropriately trained, are poorly paid, work under difficult and unattractive conditions, and are simply not up to the task they face.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) reported that it had "found that not enough of the academically able students are being attracted to teaching; that teacher preparation programs need substantial improvement; that the professional working life of teachers is on the whole unacceptable; and that a serious shortage of teachers exists in key fields" (p. 22). The Commission reported that too many teachers came from the bottom quartile of high school and college graduating classes; that teacher preparation curricula were too heavily weighted with "educational methods" courses at the expense of courses in subjects to be taught; that teachers' salaries were so low that many teachers were required to

work part-time and summers to supplement their income; that there is a severe shortage of teachers in mathematics, science, and foreign languages as well as among specialists in special education, the gifted, and bilingual education; and that a large proportion of newly employed mathematics, science, and English teachers were unqualified to teach those subjects.

The seven-part recommendation of the National Commission is aimed at improving the preparation of teachers and making "teaching a more rewarding and respected profession" (p. 30). The Commission recommends:

1. Persons preparing to teach should be required to meet high educational standards, to demonstrate aptitude for teaching, and to demonstrate competence in an academic discipline . . . .
2. Salaries for the teaching profession should be increased and should be professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based . . . .
3. School boards should adopt an 11-month contract for teachers. This would ensure time for curriculum and professional development, programs for students with special needs, and a more adequate level of teaching compensation.
4. School boards, adminstrators, and teachers should cooperate to develop career ladders for teachers. . . .
5. Substantial nonschool personnel resources should be employed to help solve the immediate problem of shortage of mathematics and science teachers. Qualified individuals including recent graduates with mathematics and science degrees, graduate students, and industrial and retired scientists could, with appropriate preparation, immediately begin teaching in these fields . . . .
6. Incentives, such as grants and loans, should be made available to attract outstanding students to the teaching profession, particularly in those areas of critical shortage.
7. Master teachers should be involved in designing teacher preparation programs and in supervising teachers during their probationary years (pp. 30-31).

In *Horace's Compromise*, (1984) Sizer

> urges renewed public attention to the importance of teaching in high schools and to the complexity and subtlety of that craft. While our systems of schools contains many consequential characteristics—for example, the subjects of the curriculum,

> the forms of governance, the uses of technologies and teaching aids, the organization of programs for special groups—none is more important than who teachers are and how they work. Without good teachers, sensibly deployed, schooling is barely worth the effort (p. 4).

Horace's Compromise is, Sizer writes, a celebration of the work of the classroom teacher but, "its primary recommendation is that America restore to teachers and to their particular students the largest share of responsibility for the latter's education." There are, he states, a good many good teachers but too many of them are demoralized and frustrated in their efforts to teach effectively.

Boyer (1983) devotes considerable attention to teachers and to ways of renewing the teaching profession. He takes the position that while teachers are blamed for much of what is wrong with schools, they cannot be improved without the help of the teachers already in the classrooms. Boyer points out that most of them will be in those classrooms for many years to come and must be viewed "as part of the solution, not the problem." Examining the conditions of the teacher's work, he finds "the teacher's world is often frustrating, frequently demeaning, and sometimes dangerous. The result for many teachers is a sense of alienation, apathy, and what is now fashionably called 'teacher burnout'" (p. 159).

Boyer recommends that teachers have no more than four formal class meetings plus responsibility for a seminar or for helping students with their independent projects; that they have a minimum of one hour daily for class preparation; that they be exempt from routine monitoring assignments in halls and lunchrooms; and that the intellectual climate of the school be improved by making it a "'center of inquiry' where teachers are freed to inquire into the nature of what and how they are teaching" (p. 160). Conditions of teaching would be improved by providing greater safety for teachers through setting and enforcing fair standards of student discipline. Boyer believes: "We cannot expect teachers to exhibit a high degree of professional competence when they are accorded such a low degree of professional treatment in their workaday world. Nor can we expect to attract the best and the brightest into teaching when they have had twelve years of opportunity to observe first hand the daily frustrations and petty humiliations that many teachers must endure" (p. 161).

Boyer also proposes to renew the teaching profession through recognition and awards for outstanding teachers and urges students and their parents to convey "directly to teachers their appreciation for a job well done" (p. 165). He urges that teachers' salaries be increased "by at lest 25 percent beyond the rate of inflation over the next three years, with immediate entry-level increases" (p. 168). He recommends the addition of a two-week Teacher Professional Development Term to the school year, a special contract every five years with extra pay to support a Summer Study Term, and a Teacher Travel Fund which would make it possible for teachers to compete for grants to keep current in their fields.

Boyer points out that the most gifted students have never been recruited into teaching: "Not only do poor students enter the profession but those who leave teaching often are the ones the school can least afford to lose" (p. 172). He urges that teaching become a top priority and gifted students be recruited to teaching by a process which begins in every high school with the establishment of a "cadet teacher" program. Higher education institutions must also become involved in recruiting better students into teaching. Boyer recommends a National Teacher Service particularly for teachers of science and mathematics that would be similar to the Peace Corps. This program would provide tuition scholarships for students in the top third of their high school graduating classes and would require them to serve at least three years in public school.

Beyond recruiting, Boyer believes that "the schooling of teachers must improve." He proposes a five-step program for this schooling. During the first two years of college, all prospective teachers would complete a core of common learning similar to the core curriculum Boyer advocates for high schools. Carefully selected teacher candidates would then enter a three-year teacher preparation sequence in their third year of college. Only students with a 3.0 or B or better average and those who are supported by two professors would be admitted. During the junior and senior years, the students would complete a major in an academic discipline and observe classes. After completing the core curriculum and a "solid academic major," the teacher candidate would have a fifth year of instructional and apprenticeship experiences. They would take a four-course education sequence which would consist of: Schooling in America, Learning Theory and Research, The Teaching of Writing, and The Use of Technology. The fifth year would also include classroom observation and teaching experience plus a series of one-day Common Learning Seminars where students would meet outstanding arts and science scholar-teachers who would relate their disciplines to a contemporary political or social theme. The time has come, Boyer asserts, that continuing education should be recognized as an essential part of the teacher's professional life: "Excellence in education will be achieved only as we invest in the education of teachers in the classroom" (p. 179).

The lack of a career ladder and the leveling off of salaries are cited as problems in the profession. Boyer proposes a ladder which includes an associate teacher status with such teachers working under the mentorship of senior teachers for two years; a teacher status; and a senior teacher status. Such a clear career path would, in Boyer's judgment, "bring health to the profession, confidence to the public, and excellence to the classroom" (p. 183). Finally, Boyer recommends that outstanding professionals be recruited to teach part-time in classrooms in fields where shortages exist or where they can provide enrichment. He suggests several approaches to enlisting such part-time professionals. One approach would have districts entering into partnerships with business and industry to set joint appointments. Teacher certification requirements would have to be modified to make it possible to accredit part-timers.

Boyer's recommendations are based on the conviction that teachers are professionals and that if his reforms for recruiting, schooling, and rewarding teachers were carried out, "teachers would . . . *be regarded* as professionals, they would be *treated* as professionals, and they would *consider themselves* professionals" (p. 185).

Goodlad (1983) also devotes considerable attention to teachers and the circumstances of teaching. He found a large majority of the teachers in the sample "tended to be idealistic and altruistic in their views of why they chose to teach" (p. 173). Unlike some other studies, Goodlad's study found that the percentages of teachers expressing career expectation fulfillment and a desire to choose a teaching career again were quite high. In Goodlad's view, "the practicing teacher . . . functions in a context where the beliefs and expectations are those of a profession but where the realities tend to constrain, likening actual practice more to a trade" (p. 193). The sample of teachers in Goodlad's study seemed to have entered teaching because of inherent professional values but, in schools, they encountered many realities not conducive to professional growth. Goodlad suggests the possibility that the instructional time of teachers be reduced to 15 hours per week and, at the same time, school-based programs be initiated for curricular and instructional improvement by the entire staff. Thus, teachers "would spend an additional four hours in the tasks of developing more viable curriculum and in preparing markedly improved lessons" (p. 195).

Goodlad summarizes his findings as follows:

> Those women—and men—who do enter teaching today work in circumstances that include some gain in their autonomy in the community accompanied by some loss of prestige and staus; an increase in the heterogeneity of students to be eduated, especially at the secondary level; increased utilization of schools to solve critical social problems such as desegregation; a marked growth in governance of the schools through legislation and the courts; continuation of relatively low personal economic return; limited opportunities for career changes within the field of education; and continuation of school and classroom conditions that drain physical and emotional energy and tend to promote routine rather than sustained creative teaching. Merely holding teachers accountable for improved student learning without addressing these circumstances is not likely to improve the quality of their professional lives and the schools in which they teach (p. 196).

Goodlad believes that the low ratio of salaries after 10 years to beginning salaries is a major deterrent to attracting persons into the field. He proposes clear distinctions among various assisting and aprentice teachers,

career teachers, and head teachers.

He proposes revising teacher education programs so that students "will acquire and persist in using as practicing teachers a greater variety of methods designed to assure students' interest and accomplishment in learning" (p. 314). He recommends a two-year program of professional studies and clinical experiences before a period of resident status. During an internship, "they would be called upon to demonstrate a full repertoire of teaching procedures, each designed to develop students' abilities in the range of goals" espoused (p. 317). These methods would be further refined and evaluated during the teacher's residency period as the individual moved toward designation as a career teacher. Goodlad expresses an urgency in reforming teacher education programs but seems not to be optimistic about necessary imminent breakthroughs.

The Education Commission of the States Task Force (1983) asserts that the nation is suffering a "teacher gap" in terms of a shortage of qualified teachers in critical subjects, not in overall numbers. The Task Force cautions that the teaching profession should not be blamed for the gap, however: "Perhaps the chief cause of the problem is the value that our society places upon elementary and secondary school teaching: a value measured by what we pay our teachers" (p. 25). Not only are salaries for teacher low but, in most states, teachers "are paid according to rigid salary schedules based primarily on training and years of experience" (p. 26). According to the Task Force, no state rewards exceptional teachers for their superior performance. Moreover, the tenure system makes it difficult, if not impossible, to deal with teachers who are ineffective or unmotivated. Pay differences between beginning and experienced teachers are small in most states. Little wonder, the Task Force observes, "that 25 percent of teachers currently at work in the classroom have stated their intention to leave teaching in the future" (p. 26).

The Task Force makes four recommendations concerning teachers and the teaching profession. First, every state and local school district will with full participation of the teachers "*drastically improve their methods for recruiting, training and paying teachers.*" Second, each state should "*create a 'career ladder' for teachers* that will help attract and keep outstanding teachers." Third, either alone or in cooperative programs, states should "*establish better preservice and inservice education programs for teachers,* so that teachers can constantly enrich their academic knowledge and improve their skills." Finally, in addition to paying higher salaries, states and communities together with the media and business leaders should "establish *new forms of recognition* to honor the contributions of teachers and to underscore publicly their crucial importance in our national life" (p. 37).

In addition, the Task Force recommends that boards of education and higher education design and install "systems for fairly and objectively measuring the effectiveness of teachers and rewarding outstanding performance;" that states improve the certification processes for teachers and administrators; that "states examine and tighten the procedures for

selecting not only those who come into teaching, but also those who ultimately stay;" and that ineffective teachers be dismissed "in due course and with due process" (p. 39).

The Southern Regional Educational Board's Task Force on Higher Education and the Schools (1983) gave high priority to upgrading the quality of teachers and other school personnel. Among its recommendations regarding teacher selection, the Task Force proposed that selection procedures should be applied throughout the entire teacher-preparation process (not at the end point only), should start with tighter admission standards and end with beginning teacher performance evaluation; that the feasibility of developing regional assessment of teacher selection techniques be explored; and that the interstate migration of well-qualified teachers be accommodated by accepting a common test. To strengthen teacher education, the SREB Task Force recommended joint ongoing evaluation of such programs by state higher education and state education boards aimed at eliminating duplication and consolidating programs while assessing "the need for and the quality and productivity of all teacher education programs (and specialties)" (p. 8). The Task Force recommended real coordination between schools and teacher education programs to provide quality student teaching assignments with early and sustained classroom exposure beginning with the junior year in order to select out persons unsuited to the profession.

The SREB Task Force also urges states to modify their certification processes to remove "rigid and unnecessary requirements." Provisional certification for all beginning teachers, including arts and science graduates for secondary school positions, should be provided until performance in the classroom has been evaluated. Weaknesses in content or methods areas which are indentified during provisional certification should be dealt with by additional courses and/or staff development activity before regular certification is granted.

The SREB Task Force gave special attention to several categories of school personnel—mathematics and science teachers, vocational guidance and vocational education teachers for specialized industrial occupations, and building leaders. It recommended a variety of incentives to attract science and mathematics teachers, including scholarship and loan programs tied to teaching those subjects within the state. It recommended that states permit mathematics and science graduates lacking professional preparation be permitted to teach in high schools "with safeguards to insure the quality of instruction," such safeguards being unspecified. Teachers in "surplus fields" should be permitted to teach mathematics and science "with refresher courses as needed." As for vocational guidance and education, it proposes that the "SREB should convene school officials, representatives from vocational and counseling groups, practicing labor market specialists, and appropriate college faculties to develop a model for the effective delivery of vocational guidance in the region's high schools" (p. 13). The relevancy of professional education courses and formal degrees for skilled personnel to teach occupational programs should be

reconsidered.

The tying of teacher pay increments and recertification to the completion of meaningful staff development activity and graduate education is also recommended as one part of achieving comprehensive continuing education plans. The SREB Task Force recommends that states increase staff development funding for local schools, "contingent on strong joint efforts by school administrators and teachers at the local level in the design of staff development plans" (p. 16). Colleges and universities are urged to use salary and promotion procedures for their faculty which specifically recognize and reward service to schools, particularly when such service is in response to a request for staff development assistance.

Adler states flatly that the quality of learning depends very largely on the quality of teaching. In *Paideia Problems and Possibilities* (1983), Adler argues that it is not true that there are too few teachers available capable of effectively initiating the Paideia program: "If they are given an opportunity to work under proper conditions, and if their talents and skills are employed for the guidance—in effect, the coaching—of less able teachers, the level of teaching in a school can be raised to the requisite quality" (p. 56). Adler believes that many teachers in schools presently are probably much better than they now have any chance of showing" and, "if freed from the onerous grind of their present occupational burdens, they can readily be inspired by the intellectual attractions of the Paideia program" (pp. 56-57). Teachers will require training in the modes of instruction, especially the Socratic method, and student deportment will have to be improved.

Adler believes that there are a relatively small number of talented, motivated, and committed teachers who perform creditably despite the adverse conditions in which they work but that number is insufficient. Bad working conditions, poor pay, lack of respect, inferior social status, and distracting demands impede good teaching. Teachers, Adler argues, "should themselves be at least as well schooled as the graduates of the schools in which they are expected to teach. They should have completed the required course of study" he recommends in his *Paideia Proposal* (1982, p. 59). Such a program would enable teachers to "teach not just this or that portion, but all of [the Paideia curriculum]." Adler argues that teachers should not have a college education which requires specializing or majoring in the subjects now required for teacher certification. Rather, *after* they have completed the general college education "either in graduate courses in a university department or school of education or in what is comparable to internship in medicine—practice teaching under supervision—only then would the teacher get the specialized training.

It is the future teacher's own experience in learning that enables the acquisition of self-understanding that, in turn, the individual teacher can help others to learn. This, Adler argues, is best developed by supervised practice: "All the skills of teaching are intellectual skills that can be developed only by coaching, not by lecture courses in pedagogy and

teaching methods such as are now taught in most schools or departments of education and are now required for certification" (p. 61).

The National Science Board Commission (1983) puts the importance of quality teaching this way: "If mathematics, science and technology are to be successfully learned, it is clear that the teachers must be of high talent, high motivation and must be allowed to function in a setting in which effective teaching is possible" (p. 22). The NSB Commission would give top priority to retraining present teachers while recruiting and retaining mathematics, science, and technology teachers. A substantial portion of the nation's 1.17 million elementary teachers "lack sufficient knowledge, training and, in many cases, interest to teach mathematics and science effectively" (p. 29). The NSB Commission observes that the use of special mathematics and science teachers at this level would reduce the retraining task. A majority of the 200,000 secondary mathematics and science teachers require additional training because of the knowledge growth in these areas and in cognitive psychology.

The NSB Commission concludes that the Federal government has an important role in providing such teacher training and retraining. Specifically, the Commission recommends that "state governments should develop teacher training programs in mathematics, science and technology in cooperation with colleges, universities and science museums, and provide for academic year and summer programs to meet the particular needs of that state" (p. 30). Where they have particular expertise, industry scientists and engineers, together with government personnel, should participate as teacher trainers. The NSB Commission sees a responsibility for the federal government in funding in-state teacher training programs in these areas with summer and in-service institutes supported by the National Science Foundation as happened after Sputnik. The use of science museums as teacher training sites should be encouraged. The NSB Commission would have the retraining and upgrading program completed in five years, after which states and local school districts should see that teacher training continues as an ongoing program. The National Science Foundation should assist in establishing state or regional teacher training programs using new information technologies.

In addition to the upgrading program, the NSB Commission recommends that "States should adopt rigorous certification standards for incoming mathematics and science teachers. Such certification standards should not set up any artificial barriers to entry into the teaching profession, but should be only those which are relevant to ensuring high quality in the teaching of mathematics, science and technology" (p. 31). For elementary school teachers, the primary requirement "should be a comprehensive liberal arts education supplemented by a limited number of effective education courses together with demonstrated teaching, including appropriate internships under a highly qualified teacher" (p. 31). For secondary school teachers, the requirement should be "a full major in the subject matter" plus a limited number of education courses, demonstrated teaching and internship. As many other reports have recommended,

the NSB Commission recommends that colleges and universities should establish higher admission, curriculum, and graduation standards for future mathematics and science teachers. They would have the liberal arts colleges play a much greater role in training teachers. The Commission recommends that education courses "be thoroughly reviewed and revised to incorporate the findings of recent research in the behavorial and social sciences," that "student teaching, which acquaints the teaching candidate with children and classroom procedures, and proven methods courses be emphasized," and that "teacher training should incorporate the use of calculators and computers in mathematics and science instruction" (p. 32).

To fill the present gap until teachers can be trained or retrained, the NSB Commission recommends drawing on industry, higher education, the military, government and other sources as well as retired persons, modifying certification requirements for such personnel "who are qualified in the subject matter but lack certain education credits." Local schools should use such "special teachers" and arrange for appropriate classroom supervision.

The NSB Commission is concerned with teachers' salaries and recommends adjusting compensation so that they can compete for and keep high quality teachers in fields where there are shortages: "States, together with teacher unions when they are bargaining agents, school boards and industry representatives, should carefully examine current working conditions, salary levels, issues of comparability, length of the work day/week/year, tenure provisions, promotion procedures and other factors that are important aspects of teacher compensation" (p. 34). They would have excellence in teaching be rewarded by the teacher's moving up a salary and status ladder while remaining in the classroom. They would have school systems explore ways of extending the employment year for mathematics and science teachers by paying for in-service education, curriculum development activities, and the lengthening of the school year. The Commission also suggests that industry, the military, and government provide summer or year-round part-time employment for science and mathematics teachers. Finally, as did the National Commission on Excellence in Education, the NSB Commission suggests that the excellent teacher be rewarded through publicity and special financial awards.

To improve classroom conditions and enable teachers to be more effective, the NSB Commission recommends that mathematics and science teachers be given the time to teach and that they be relieved of other tasks frequently thrust on them or their students during the class period; that school districts adopt rigorous discipline policies which reflect their goals and expectations; and that they provide reasonable and manageable class sizes, up-to-date texts and curriculum materials, and necessary classroom equipment and materials.

While "excellence in teaching" is never defined, clearly implied is teaching which results in high academic achievement by students. The reports tend to agree that teaching does not attract enough academically

able students; that teacher preparation programs are inadequate, providing too much in methods courses and not enough in academic studies; that teaching must be made much more attractive and that the conditions of work must be improved; that there are shortages in key subject fields; that outstanding teaching should be recognized and rewarded, possibly through merit pay; and that salaries should be increased and career ladders established. But, aside from increasing teacher salaries and making the conditions of teaching more attractive—actions which are generally supported by the teaching profession except when merit pay is attached to the proposals—most of the other diagnoses and prescriptions simply reopen long and continuing controversies of the past regarding the selection, education, certification, and continuing education of teachers. A good number of states are reviewing state legislation and mandates concerning teachers and teaching.

In a review of research regarding teachers, their preparation and their work, Sykes (1983) observes: "Concern about the quality of education today frequently focuses on the teacher. Policymakers and the general public worry over who is entering teaching, how well qualified the student teachers are, how adequate their preparation has been, whether veteran teachers are committed to their work, whether a teacher shortage looms, and what the future holds for the profession" (p. 23).

Sykes observes that the evidence concerning the academic ability of persons entering teacher preparation programs "is compelling but not decisive . . . . Teaching appears to attract the least academically able and to be decreasingly attractive" (pp. 23, 25). However, this is not a new phenomenon; education has never attracted the brightest and the best. The situation has been exacerbated in recent years by the women's movement which has opened career opportunities in previously male-dominated professions, with teaching becoming less attractive.

However, Sykes asks what academic ability has to do with good teaching: "Everyone would agree that teachers must be masters of the subject matter they are to impart to students, but scores on intelligence or general achievement tests are imperfect substitutes for subject mastery" (p. 26). Sykes concludes that subject mastery is clearly a desideratum for teachers but the evidence is not clear that there is "a relationship between teacher academic achievement or ability and student outcomes" (p. 26). Sykes speculates that there may be a "floor effect" with teachers whose academic aptitude is below that threshold being less effective but "there is no evidence on what the floor may be or on whether we are in danger of approaching it" (p. 26). Several reports assert that we have already reached the point of accepting academically less able students into teacher preparation programs. The issue is whether raising the standards for admission and toughening selection will, in fact, result in more academically able students entering teacher preparation programs without other concurrent changes in the teaching profession, the conditions of work in the schools, and more general labor market and societal conditions. These related conditions may actually be antecedent

conditions rather than necessary concurrent changes. Sykes, for example, asserts that in teaching the processes of recruitment and retention tend to select out the more academically able: "To 'raise standards,' then by restricting entry to programs of teacher education would ultimately produce a teacher shortage" (p. 26).

The proposals for reforming teacher education proposal are hardly new. The issue of the balance between what Borrowman (1977) called the "liberal" and the "technical"—the general education and the professional education of teachers—has been argued for decades and has surfaced regularly in the emergence of teacher preparation programs. Part of the discussion hinges on the conception of professional education, whether there is a body of knowledge, skills, insights, and understandings which can be transmitted through professional experiences or whether mastery of subject matter to be taught without pedagogy or with a very limited amount of pedagogical training is adequate. For decades, there have been those who argue that what is needed is study of academic disciplines in a program largely devoid of pedagogical studies and that this will produce qualified teachers. Others have argued that there is a knowledge base for teacher education which requires a balance betwen the liberal and the technical. Most of the reports take the former position, at least with respect to high school teachers, recommending that a heavy liberal arts program with a substantive major in an academic subject, a very limited exposure to pedadogical professional study, and some student teaching/internship experiences are adequate for preparation of classroom teachers. There are others who would argue just as strongly for a balance, possibly adjusted from the current balance. Probably all would agree that reform of teacher preparation and certification programs is necessary—professional education organizations and teacher educators have continuously argued about the nature and direction of such reforms—but there is no consensus beyond that.

In taking the position that teacher preparation and certification, especially for high school teachers, should focus on subject matter and that persons who are well prepared in subject matter areas should be permitted to teach even though they lack pedagogical training, the reports are not proposing a new style of teacher preparation or certification but are once again reviving a position long advocated, one which surfaces regularly. Even the recent attention to Competency-Based Teacher Education (CBTE), so popular among state education departments in the 1970s, seems to have been buried in the proposals for teacher education and certification based essentially on subject matter achievement. State legislatures and departments of education seem to be taking the position that more liberal arts and subject matter study is needed but pedagogical training is also necessary. Consequently, some teacher education programs have been lengthened, student-teaching and internship programs have been postponed until after undergraduate preparation, and special attention is being given to shortage areas such as mathematics and science to attract individuals with strong math-science backgrounds into

the classroom. Student teaching or internship experience still seem to have favor among the reformers. In fact, some reformers suggest that apprenticeship teaching experience is really all that should be required for teacher certification.

There is consensus that whatever approaches are used for teacher preparation and certification, continuing education or in-service education is essential for staff development. But, beyond the agreement that continuing education be an integral part of professional development, there is little agreement on the nature of such education, where and how it should take place, under whose auspices, and under what conditions. Several reports recommend longer school years as a means of providing recompensed time for staff development and curriculum development. Several were critical of current in-service education activities as not contributing to either liberal or technical growth of teachers but only to salary increments. Again the nature and quality of in-service education has been the focus of considerable research and study and the issues concerning in-service education should not be resolved by personal preferences. What constitutes what Boyer (1983, p. 179) calls "a realistic continuing-education policy that serves all teachers" is not at all clear even though the goal is one on which there is little controversy.

Recommendations concerning teacher salaries—that they be increased for beginning teacher and for experienced teachers as a means of making teaching more attractive for recruitment and retention purposes—are strongly supported by all parties except those who have to fund such increases. Old ideas of merit pay, differentiated pay, differentiated pay and career ladders, master teachers, all of which have surfaced from time to time, are again proposed. Because they are not new does not mean that they do not have merit, of course. However, unless the issues surrounding them are examined and understood, there is no reason to expect that they will be more widely accepted or impiemented this time around. Even the proposals to make "teaching more rewarding and respected" seem to ignore studies of what it is that cause teachers to be more satisfied with conditions of their profession. There are indications that factors which enable teachers to teach and students to learn in a safe, dynamic environment are at least as important as additional salaries. Again, simplistic solutions for complicated problems are hardly likely to produce dramatic changes in the nature and quality of teaching and learning.

The School Principal

In line with the "effective schools" literature, several reports focus on the importance of the building principal as leader. Boyer (1983), for example, reports that his field studies support the findings of the pivotal role of the principal: "In schools where achievement was high and where there was a clear sense of community, we found, invariably, that the principals made the difference . . . . If the goals we set forth in this report are to be accomplished, strong leadership will be needed to pull together the separate elements in the school and make them work" (p. 219).

Goodlad (1983) also sees the building principal as exercising planning leadership. He suggests that the principle of "every tub on its own bottom" should guide district organization but schools should not be cut loose either from the district office or from each other. His view of decentralization is one of schools linked to the district office as a hub and to each other in a network. Thus, "the principal is the captain with full authority and responsibility for the ship. But, if reasonably wise and prepared for the post, he or she will make [decisions] in the company and with the counsel of others" (p. 277).

The school principal's role, in Adler's view, is different from other administrators in the school district or school system since unlike those units, the school is a community whose main business is "teaching and learning. The head of the school—its principal—should, therefore, administer all other affairs [of the school] in ways that facilitate the *main business*" (1982, p. 64). Adler would have principals be "notably competent and dedicated" teachers with considerable classroom experience, who should have the authority to hire and fire teachers and the power to enforce standards of conduct and discipline.

Despite the findings in numerous studies that "one key determinant of excellence in public schooling is the leadership of the individual school principal," the Education Commission of the States Task Force (1983) believes that "in too many schools, principals spend too little time managing education and too much time managing everything else: buildings, grounds, paperwork and other efforts that are only indirectly related to teaching and learning" (p. 29).

To improve leadership by the school principal, the ECS Task Force recommends that the "principal should be freed from distractions; encouraged to give priority to improving classroom instruction; given sufficient discretion over personnel and fiscal planning; and put squarely in charge of maintaining the school's morale, discipline and academic quality" (p. 40). In addition the Task Force recommends higher pay, related to principal responsibilities and effectiveness; higher standards for selecting principals and monitoring their performance; and, with the help of business, better training and use of effective management techniques.

In Boyer's view, school systems are top-heavy with administration and "school leadership is crippled by layer upon layer of administration" (1983, p. 224). Principals, he believes, need to be given greater authority over functions for which they have responsibility. Presently, the exercise of leadership is restricted: "Principals have limited time, few resources, and little leeway for decision making," little control over budgets, few discretionary funds, limited ability to reward outstanding teachers or deal with unsatisfactory ones, and constraints on freedom to develop new programs. Boyer recommends that in each of these areas—budget, school improvement discretionary funds, monitoring and rewarding good teaching, selection and retention of teachers—the school principal be given greater authority and autonomy so that the "principal becomes not

just the top authority but the key educator, too" (p. 229).

Goodlad (1983) found in an earlier study of change and school improvement that most of the school principals lacked the skills and understandings needed to bring about educational improvement: "They did not know how to select problems likely to provide leverage for schoolwide improvement, how to build long-term agenda, how to assure some continuity of business from faculty meeting to faculty meeting, how to secure and recognize a working consensus, and on and on" (p. 306). The reason, he believes, is that the selection and preparation of principals "is, to say the least, casual." What is needed is an upgrading of both the "status of the principalship and the quality of those who aspire to it." There should be, Goodlad believes, a continuous effort to identify persons with leadership potential and an investment by the district in developing such potential for a future pay off. He proposes that "states might well underwrite the costs involved [in selecting and preparing candidates for principalships] by eliminating much of the cumbersome, costly machinery now required for accrediting programs and establishing fellowships for our future educational leaders. It would be difficult to suggest a better way to use public funds wisely" (p. 307).

Goodlad also recommends employing head teachers to provide leadership for schooling units. Such head teachers would be highly successful classroom teachers with a doctorate, who would be paid additional salaries beyond the existing scale and would continue to teach part-time while serving as role models for fellow teachers, providing them with in-service help, and assisting them with instructional problems. In proposing head teachers as "instructional leaders," Goodlad recognizes that he is making "a counterproposal to the currently popular one that principals themselves be the instructional leaders in schools, acquiring the necessary specialized preparation, teaching pedagogical skills to the teachers, and evaluating teachers' performance" (p. 302). Goodlad agrees that the principal has a responsibility for assuring that teachers have opportunities for improving their teaching but believes that "the more extended definition of the modeling and evaluating role" is inappropriate. He would stress doing better with the teachers we have, redefining the role of teachers who are capable of providing leadership for instruction.

Strongly administrative leadership by the building principal is seen as one of the linchpins of effective schools. As the Educational Commission of the States Task Force (1983) puts it: "where the principal is well-trained, highly motivated and zealously devoted to inspiring excellence among teachers and students, the effect is bracing—even in ghetto schools whose facilities are inadequate and whose students come from poor families" (p. 29). Goodlad's reasons for proposing head teachers as instructional teachers are threefold: (1) the task of being both the role model and the monitor of all teaching is too much, one or the other assignments will suffer if one individual is called on to do both full-time jobs; (2) it is "naive and absurd" to assume that a principal who may or may not have been a good classroom teacher will maintain a higher level of teaching expertise

than full-time teachers, especially at the secondary school level where there is such diversity in subject areas; and (3) the trust in the principal-teacher relation will suffer if the principal is to be both the evaluator and the judge of teachers. Clearly, the building principal has an important role to play in instructional matters, but simply designating the principal as instructional leader does not necessarily make him or her one.

The Education Commission of the States Task Force (1983) suggests that "in many places, the prevailing definition of the principal's role must be changed to put the principal squarely in charge of educational quality in each school" (p. 40).

Business Corporation-School Partnership

Several reports urge business corporations to become more heavily involved in public school education. Boyer (1983) observes that "traditionally, corporate America has stood aloof from public schools. While complaining about the quality of education, it has failed to get involved" (p. 268). Among the ways Boyer suggests corporations can get involved are: (1) Adopt-a-School partnerships, (2) helping disadvantaged students, (3) providing enrichment for gifted and talented students, (4) helping teachers through employment opportunities, in-service education, and mini-grants for innovative projects, (5) helping students connect from school to work, and (6) providing management and leadership training for staff members.

Other reports urge business corporation-school partnerships be developed to secure financial support for the schools. Such cooperation, Boyer believes

> yields a special profit. The pay-off cannot always be clearly measured in dollars and cents, but the chance to work with young people who may soon be employees, to help to cultivate in them a sense of responsibility and an excitement of discovery, to enrich the teachers, to give the principal support while at the same time enlarging the corporate vision by working for the betterment of society—these are among the returns that some executives are already including on their company's balance sheets (p. 280).

The Business-Higher Education Forum (1983) focused its entire report on forging new partnerships between business and higher education toward "strengthening the ability of this nation to compete more effectively in the world marketplace" (p. iii). Describing American workers as America's "single most valuable economic resource," the report suggests that a national strategy for education, training, and retraining is needed that will involve the public sector, business-industry, and the government.

The Education Commission of the States (1983) called for new alliances among educators and other groups:

> We believe especially that businesses, in their role as employers, should be much more deeply involved in the process of setting goals for education in America and helping our schools to reach those goals. And we believe that legislators, labor leaders, parents, and institutions of higher learning, among others, should be far more involved with the public schools than they are at present (p. 3).

Federal, State, and Local Roles and Responsibilities

Some reports are directed specifically at the roles to be played by particular sectors. The Twentieth Century Fund Task Force (1983) focused on federal elementary and secondary education policy. The Task Force examined the federal commitment in the past and the need for a continued federal role in ways which complement local control. This calls, the report believes, for "a change in direction, replacing the current emphasis on regulations and mandated with a new emphasis on incentives" (p. 7).

The Education Commission of the States (1983) acknowledged the importance of a strong federal comitment to education, one backed by sufficient resources. However, their report focused on "action at the state and local level, and to call for a new commitment and new action from the states and communities of America" because that is where the major responsibility for education lies. The report observes: "Education for economic growth is indeed a national challenge, and it justifies national leadership and a national response. But important national commitments, in our judgment, do not only trickle down; they also bubble up" (p. 3).

The National Science Board's Commission (1983) actually gave the federal government a key role in implementing its action plan. The cost of recommended federal initiatives was estimated at $1.51 billion dollars. Some fourteen specific recommendations are assigned price tags, with the last one, "Private industry and government agencies should create programs and opportunities which let children see science and technology in actual operation in their plants and installations" (p. 114), costing nothing additional. The Department of Education and the National Science Foundation are given major roles and responsibilities in the plan's implementation.

IV. Dealing with the Reform Reports of the 1980s

Among the terms which recur regularly in the various reports calling for educational reform in the 1980s are the words *crisis* and *excellence*. Variations of "There is a crisis in American education" and "Drastic changes are needed if we are again to pursue the course of excellence in education" are found repeatedly. Of course, no one is really opposed to excellence in education although there are diverse and often conflicting understandings of its meaning.

The notion that there is a crisis in American education, especially in the high school, is taken as a given in most of today's reports. There are issues concerning the nature and the extent of the current crisis. The crisis theme has recurred regularly over the past 90 years or so. Crisis was the theme expressed in several reports on the high schools of the 1970s, in the literature dealing with urban education and the disadvantaged in the 1960s, in the attacks on progressive education in the early 1950s and the post-Sputnik literature at the end of that decade, in the life-adjustment and vocational education literature of the 1940s and the post-World War II writings, and the educational reports issued during the Great Depression years of the 1930s. Lawrence A. Cremin (1964) summarized the indictment of the high schools by the Progressive Education Association's Commission on the Relation of School and College in its 1931 report in familiar terms: "They had failed to convey a sincere appreciation of the American heritage; they did not prepare adequately for citizenship; they seldom challenged gifted students to the limit of their abilities; they neither guided nor motivated their pupils effectively; and their curricula were a hodgepodge of lifeless material unrelated to the real concerns of young people" (p. 252).

Part of the perceived reasons for these shortcomings has always been the expectations and priorities the public has had for the schools. In her study of American education between 1945-1980, Diane Ravitch (1983) points out:

> Throughout history, Americans have expected much of their educational institutions; sometimes schools have been expected to take on responsibilities for which they were entirely unsuited. When they have failed, it was usually because their leaders and their public alike had forgotten their real limitations as well as their real strengths (p. xii).

One of the major reasons for crises in American education is the shifting expectations. Should the schools be held responsible for Sputnik having been launched before the American satellite? For the current economic problems of America's industries vis-à-vis Japan and West Germany? Should schools share in the praise when the nation is economically

healthy? Schools have fulfilled many expectations and goals. The fact that America's schools seem to be in a perennial state of crisis for shifting reasons, however, does not make the current calls for reform any less urgent nor does it permit dismissing them on the basis of "So, what else is new?" Rather, the recurring notion of our schools being in a state of crisis—however those crises are defined—calls for examining the basis for those concerns in the current context.

The Crisis in Education Today

The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) set the tone for current reports by listing 13 "educational dimensions of risk" before the nation which constituted indicators of a crisis. These included reports of poor scores on achievement tests, decline in enrollments and achievement in science and mathematics, high cost of remedial and training programs for business and the military, and unacceptable levels of functional illiteracy found among American children and adults. Many of these same indicators are found in one form or another in other reports, although the extent of blame assigned to the schools for what the National Commission calls "the rising tide of mediocrity" varies. Boyer (1983), for example, while suggesting that the National Commission may have overstated the case, still points out that "a deep erosion of confidence in our schools, coupled with disturbing evidence that at least some of the skepticism is justified, has made revitalizing the American high school an urgent matter" (p. 6).

Although the idea of an educational crisis and of shortcomings in our schools is firmly reasserted in various reports, the data can be read differently and not all analysts take the indicators or the interpretations at face value. Lawrence C. Stedman and Marshall S. Smith (1983), for instance, examined four reports for the "quality of their analysis and recommendations rather than on the theoretical or political importance of the documents" and observed:

> At the outset, it should be recognized that these reports are political documents; the case they make takes the form of a polemic not a reasoned treatise. Rather than carefully marshalling facts to prove their case, they present a litany of charges without examining the veracity of their evidence or its sources. By presenting material starkly and often eloquently the commissions hoped to jar the public into action, and to a great extent they have been successful. Caveats and detailed analysis of evidence might have lessened the reports' impact" (p. 6).

Looking at three aspects of the case for reform made in *A Nation at Risk*—the quality of the evidence for the "sorry state" of American education, the comparisons of the achievement of U.S. students with those of other nations, and the assumption that our economic system is undergoing

a high technology revolution—together with the recommendations made in the report concerning leadership, time, content, and teachers, Stedman and Smith conclude:

> The commissions used weak arguments and poor data to make their case. Neither the decline in test scores, the international comparisons, nor the growth of hi-tech employment provided a clear rationale for reform. By ignoring their background reports and carelessly handling data, their reports further lost credibility. In particular, the commissions made simplistic recommendations and failed to consider their ramifications. They proposed increasing time without altering pedagogy, instituting merit schemes without describing procedures, and adopting the "new basics" without changing old definitions. They ignore numerous problems—teenage unemployment, teacher burnout, and high dropout rates—that must be solved before American education can be considered sound. They did not address the special needs of the poor and minorities (p. 35).

In the background paper Paul E. Peterson prepared for the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force (1983), he reviewed current trends in American education and concluded: "Nothing in these data permits the conclusion that educational institutions have deteriorated badly, and, certainly, nothing supports the claim that an increased federal role has had a fundamental effect" (pp. 59-60). Nevertheless, the Task Force begins its report with the statement: "The nation's public schools are in trouble. By almost every measure—the commitment and competency of teachers, student test scores, truancy and dropout rates, crimes of violence—the performance of our schools falls far short of expectations" (p. 3). And, the report proposes an increased federal role.

Similarly, Peterson (1983) while viewing the proclamations of crisis as the most arresting portion of the six reports he analyzed for the Brookings Institute, concluded that "the information offered in support of the claims that American schools have failed is patchy, dated, and not nearly as dramatic as the rhetoric employed" (p. 4). For example, Peterson notes,

> The studies are quick to assume that declining high school test scores can be attributed to shortcomings of the educational system. There are, though, other factors that may be at work here—such as the increased use of drugs and alcohol, a rise in the percentage of students who live in single-parent households, and declining employment opportunities—and no one has been able to establish that changes in the classroom, independent

> changes in the larger society, are to blame for drops in test results (p. 4).
>
> [Furthermore] they survey the educational scene in such a sweeping fashion that only through the selective use of uncertain evidence can they make the case that American schools have declined. By attempting to speak to general problems, they preclude themselves from analyzing particular ones (p. 5).

The objectives the commissions proclaim, in Peterson's view, are "so much the accepted wisdom that they are truisms." What the panels fail to do is "to show how to get the quality and excellence we all desire." (p. 106). While Peterson believes that educational commission reports have only limited value, these may ultimately be seen as having a major impact on American education because student achievement has already begun improving, the schools may not be subjected to as many traumatic events (such as desegregation), and sustained economic growth by the nation may benefit schools. Thus, there may be visible improvements which are only coincidental with the recommendations contained in the reports.

The Context of Schooling

In many ways, the reports of a decade ago were much more concerned with the broader context of schooling and school climate as these affect the quality of life and education in schools. For instance, the California Commission for Reform of Intermediate and Secondary Education (1975) observed:

> Through television, films, other media, and actual experience, today's adolescents are witnessing cultural, political, and technological events their parents and grandparents never have imagined. Young people now are confronted with confusing and complicated social problems and turmoil that earlier generations never encountered. These situations have a profound effect on oday's youth and upon the attitudes and performance of young people in and out of school (pp. x-xi).

The California RISE Commission cited what it called "alarming statistics" concerning the "unstable social climate" in which children and youth are being raised: divorce rate, poor voting record, alcoholism, suicide, drug abuse, child abuse, venereal disease, vandalism, dropouts, and, lastly, dropping achievement test scores. These are conditions "which stem largely from society's inability to find effective solutions to the very problems it created" (p. xii). The RISE Commission argued that certainly the schools cannot be responsible for curing society's ills but that these ills affected education: schools "can and should be able to prepare young people for the demands and problems of modern life" (p. xii).

There are those who argue that concern with such societal factors

impacting on student performance is simply an evasion by the school in fulfilling its responsibility for educating youngsters. By avoiding a discussion of the social context of education and schooling, the reports imply that students and schools are unchanged and that we need only return to the programs and practices of yesteryear to recover the excellence we have presumably lost.

The Poor, the Minorities, and Urban Schools

One of the criticisms made of the reports of the 1970s was that they seemed to be based on a high school population which was essentially white, middle-class, male, and suburban. While some of Boyer's and Goodlad's schools were certainly urban and even inner-city, in general the reports failed to attend to the particular problems of schools with large populations of poor and minority children. For more than two decades, urban schools in particular have been engaged in serious compensatory education efforts aimed at giving meaning to the concepts of equity and equality of educational opportunity for disadvantaged students. While there has been discernible improvement with respect to the socio-psycho-educational problems which compensatory education programs have attempted to address, if there is a crisis in education it is in the urban schools and it is a very real one. The levels of literacy and numeracy in urban schools still tend for the most part to lag below that of the nation's schools in general and probably account for a good share of the National Commission on Excellence in Education's indicator of risk.

Most of the recommendations simply ignore the particular needs of the poor and minorities. There is an implicit assumption that urban disadvantaged are no different from other students and to believe otherwise is anti-intellectual and anti-democratic. The basic concept of compensatory education is to design curricula, instructional strategies, educational resources, and school climates which will stimulate both affective and cognitive development. Simply recommending that school personnel get tougher, stiffen academic demands, and crack down on discipline problems without dealing with the pedagogical/curricular/personnel innovations needed is tantamount to advising urban schools to "try harder and do better."

A related concern for urban schools, although not restricted to them, is the issue of bilingual education—an area which, with one exception, is ignored by the study groups. The Twentieth Century Fund's Task Force recommends that the federal government assert clearly that the development of literacy in English is the most important objective for elementary and secondary schools and that federal funds now used for bilingual education be used to teach English to non-English speaking children. Boyer's first priority is the "mastery of English" for all (1983, p. 86), but the problems which bilingual education attempts to address are ignored. Current policy, both legislative and judicial, is to promote bilingual education. There exists a good deal of research and literature on the pros and cons of bilingual education. A sizeable section of the elementary and

secondary student population is involved. What is the basis for the Twentieth Century Fund's recommendation and why have the issues surrounding bilingual education been ignored? Incidentally, the Twentieth Century Fund report does urge that all children be given the opportunity to acquire proficiency in a second language—presumably the child's mother tongue after having acquired English language proficiency.

Excellence, Equity, and Standards

The National Commission on Excellence in Education defined excellence at the level of the individual learner as "performing on the boundary of individual ability in ways that test and push back personal limits" and, at the level of the school, as "setting high expectations and goals for all learners, then [trying] in every way possible to help students reach them" (1983, p. 12). But excellence is the shibboleth of the day. Excellence, in the reports, has come to mean higher standards, tougher academic requirements, reduction or the elimination of electives, more mathematics and science, more homework, longer school days and school years, better school discipline and classroom management, and more regular testing. This also means a common core curriculum of basic subjects to be required of all students, best exemplified by the National Commission on Excellence in Education's "Five New Basics" and the *Paideia Proposal's* common course of study for all.

The issue is one which has been with us a long time. It represents basically an ideological schism between those who believe that there is a common culture to be transmitted to all through a common curriculum and those who believe in individualized, differentiated programs focused on the needs of students. This is a grossly oversimplified statement of the issue which might also be viewed as the difference between the Report of the Committee of Ten in 1893 and the *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* in 1918. The proposals dealing with a common curriculum, a common set of requirements, elimination of tracking at the high school, reduction or elimination of vocational emphasis are all part of this ideology. Chester E. Finn, Jr. (1983) points out: "The important consideration is that most of the contemporary efforts to improve educational quality are universalistic, scholiocentric, and cognitive. They unabashedly assume that everyone can and should learn the same things, at least up to a point, and that that point should be the same for everyone in a school, a community, or an entire state" (p. 21).

The basic questions have to do with whether a common curriculum and uniform standards are appropriate in a pluralistic society, whether such curricula and standards can be realistically implemented, and whether individual differences can and should be accommodated.

Adler's citation of Robert Maynard Hutchins' assertion—"The best education for the best is the best education for all"—is again a challenge to those who believe that different programs and services are necessary if we are, in the words of the Educational Policies Commission (1952) up to "the weighty task of giving life to the great ideal of educational opportunity

for the varied children of a heterogeneous people" (p. 24).

It is this ideological difference and the programs and practices which flow from it that again raises the question of equity and excellence. Most reports deny any conflict between the goals of educational equity and excellence, simply asserting that both must be pursued simultaneously and that equity is not possible without excellence. Some are concerned that a common curriculum with uniform standards will result in large numbers of poor and minority youth leaving the schools as unable to attain the required standards. The reports imply that, to the contrary, this will result in higher levels of performance for all. The uproar over New York State's *Proposed Action Plan* was, in large part, an equity vs. excellence debate—whether disadvantaged children and youth were to be doomed to failure since the schools seemed not to have the programs, strategies, or resources needed to produce a desired achievement. Since commission reports are designed to provide the big ideas, leaving the details of implementation to be worked out elsewhere, they probably should not be faulted for implying, if not asserting, that we need only to raise our expectations and the desired high standards of excellence will materialize. Several commentators have observed that the commission reports propose very acceptable goals but are weak in suggesting the means for achieving them other than to urge that we raise the standards and increase the rigor of schooling.

A quarter of a century ago, writing on "The Pursuit of Excellence: Education and the Future of America," Gardner (1961) urged that we not adopt "a narrow or constricting view of excellence but we should embrace many kinds of achievement at many levels;" that we recognize that excellence is a product of ability, motivation, and character, not native ability alone; and that we "recognize that judgments of differences in talent are not judgments of differences in human worth" (p. 356). Gardner argued:

> it is possible for us to cultivate the ideal of excellence while retaining the moral values of equality. Whether we shall succeed in doing so is perhaps the fundamental issue in development of our human resources . . . . Our society will have passed an important milestone of maturity when those who are the most enthusiastic proponents of a democratic way of life are also the most vigorous proponents of excellence (pp.356-357).

Gardner was not speaking of a very narrow conception of excellence, based on high academic achievement especially in mathematics and science, but an excellence based on the quality of one's performance in socially valuable areas. Many commission reports agree on cultivating excellence and equality but with a much more narrow conception of the former which raises questions about the latter. Many of the recommendations, implemented without development of new and appropriate strategies and programs and taking account of changing climates and

environments, could lead to increased dropout/pushout among those who are not academic achievers. While this is denied by most report writers, mere protestations will not resolve this "fundamental issue in development of our human resources."

Reforming the Schools—Teaching and Learning

Even, or especially if, the sad diagnoses concerning the sorry state of American education in the 1980s are accepted, including the depiction of the high school as an institution which survives only because students and teachers have negotiated a live-and-let-live truce, then surely the recommendations can generally be characterized as simplistic, conservative, perhaps unrealistic but communicated with earnestness and a sense of urgency.

With perhaps three exceptions, the reports again focus on the high schools, proposing higher standards and tougher curricula, paying little or no attention to the early childhood and elementary experiences which prepare youth for the Five New Basics and the rigorous courses they are required to take at the high school level.

In proposing a common curriculum for all, the requirements are not unlike those of the traditional college preparatory program before the colleges dropped their foreign language requirements after World War II. The common curriculum concept could have come straight out of the Report of the Committee of Ten (1893), Bestor's *Restoration of Learning* (1953), Conant's *The American High School Today* (1959) (although Conant would never have approved of only two years of a foreign language) or a number of proposals which followed Sputik. The Committee of Ten asserted that high schools were not meant for that small portion of youth going on to college alone but that the college preparatory curriculum happened to be the best one for all students.

The issues surrounding the common-required curriculum can be viewed, in part, as a continuation of the traditionalist-progressive debate. Unlike the reformeres of the 1970s who looked at the changing nature of high school youth in a changing society and proposed reform by options and alternatives, the reformers of the 1980s propose reform by a return to what is an updated set of basics which form a common curriculum for all. Boyer (1983) has added "a new Carnegie unit" involving volunteer service in the community or school which is not unlike the community-based experience education of the last decade.

However, there is a revival of "the old Carnegie unit" with the recommendation that state and local high school graduation requirements be strengthened to include a set number of years of English, mathematics, science, social studies, computer science, and foreign languages. Sizer (1983) is one of the few current reformers who proposes exhibitions of mastery, not number of units or years, as the basis for a high school diploma. Sizer opposes the common standardized curriculum arguing for decentralized authority in order "to allow teachers and principals to adapt their schools to the needs, learning styles, and learning rates of their

particular students" (p. 214-215).

A major problem with respect to the common core curriculum is that years or units do not spell out substance and content. A year of English may be little more than a remedial reading course or it may provide the study of literature at an advanced level or some other elementary or advanced experience. Students may be forced to take more mathematics and science without substantively improving their level of achievement. In short, the difficult tasks of developing curricula which are more appropriate for the twenty-first century, designing instructional strategies for implementing such curricula, and providing teachers capable of teaching such curricula make up the real problem of reform beyond recommending more academic requirements. The National Science Board's Commission recognized the need for curriculum development, materials production and teacher education if science and mathematics programs were to be upgraded. The Commission urges that the National Science Foundation once again take leadership in such efforts. In making those recommendations, the Commission does not address the question of what was learned in the so-called "era of curriculum reform" which followed the Sputnik launching. Will the same mistakes be repeated?

Several reports recommend abolition of tracking in the high schools. Adler (1982) describes grouping as an "abominable discrimination" and Boyer (1983) proposes a single track for his required common curriculum with a pattern of electives and options available for further study and work experience. Boyer also suggests that "special arrangements" be made for gifted students, including the establishment of magnet schools and residential academies. Grouping and tracking practices have been controversial for some time and yet they continue to be widely employed. Goodlad (1983) implies that we really do not know enough about individual differences to group children. Adler (1982) is quite clear in his assertion that there are individual differences but they must be accommodated pedagogically, not through curriculum differentiation. Recommending the abolition of tracking without suggesting alternative organizational arrangements and possibilities is another example of the "you work out the details" approach fund in many reports.

Considering the stimulus for much reform activity, the recommendations concerning mathematics, science, and technology are not surprising: students should take more, for longer periods of time and have better quality teaching. Also, extra resources should be provided for upgrading instruction in these areas for all students, not only the gifted and talented. Will there be a cost in terms of instruction in the humanities and arts areas? If so, is the cost a matter of concern? Can we simply demand more study in mathematics and science without building the necessary skills area required for advanced study? What about the "education of the citizenry in the spirit of the polity?" The National Defense Education Act of 1958 started off focusing on science, mathematics, and foreign language instruction but soon broadened to consider curriculum and instruction in all curricular areas. Should we focus on subjects and disciplines only or is

there a place for interdisciplinary studies and alternate ways of organizing knowledge?

While the value of vocational education programs has been the focus of considerable study and debate for many years, the current reports seem to favor the Adler position that there is no place for vocational education in the common school and that the liberal education he proposes is really the best vocational preparation schools can provide. Boyer reports that vocational education graduates' prospects for jobs are no better than those who have not participated in such programs. Goodlad argues that vocational education students are short-changed in the academic areas and vice versa. While eliminating tracking, Boyer would not eliminate vocational courses—only those so-called "marketable skills courses" which lack intellectual substance. A decade ago, the development of an effective education-work policy was recommended as a high priority agenda item for secondary schools. The more successful urban high schools are those with a strong, well-conceived vocational education component. Whether the career education efforts will provide for this function of the school is still questionable. In moving back to the Five New Basics and a common core curriculum for all, the issues concerning vocational and career education can be ignored only at the peril of failing to serve a sizeable student population, particularly in urban schools. The deadline has long since passed for a reconceptualization of vocational/career education and of education-work policies and such review cannot consist of a return to the traditional academics alone.

The reports see a rosy future for high technology and urge that the schools get at the business of preparing youngsters for that future. The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) recommends that a half year of computer science be part of the "new basics." The National Science Board's Commission writes always about "mathematics, science and technology" and proposes at least a semester of computer science. One report (Lazerson *et al.*, 1983) raises questions about problems of equal access to computers and to computer-assisted instruction, noting an increasing gap between the have and the have-not schools. Clearly there are many issues involving the nature of the nation's high tech future, the nature of appropriate computer studies for diverse student groups, the nature of computers as aids in education, and the relation between home and school computers. These are not resolved by adding a half-year requirement to the high school curriculum.

Lazerson *et al.* (1983) believes that criticisms of what is viewed as a smorgasbord or cafeteria style curriculum that have led to demands for a common core curriculum do force us to look more carefully at the purposes of schooling. Too often, however, the debates ask the wrong questions and run the risk of setting up only minimal expectations: "Most of all . . . debates about a core curriculum which concentrate on what students are taking rather than how much and how well they are learning will fail to enhance either the commitment to learning or learning itself" (p. 74).

School Climate and Environment

Much has been written recently about the schools as communities and about the quality of life in those communities. The accounts vary as do the schools. Some high schools are depicted as restricted prison-like communities; others as war zones in which a truce has been declared between students and teachers; and still others as thriving, living communities in which real learning flourishes. Of course, schools are all of these and more.

Considerable attention is given to improving school discipline so that teaching and learning can go forth without hindrance. School violence and vandalism, absenteeism and truantism, rampant class cutting were all cited as significant problems a decade ago. Several reports recommend tightening up on discipline in the schools and the Reagan Administration is giving high priority to this problem, including study of ways of altering civil rights legislation that the Administration perceives as hampering the school authorities' ability to deal with discipline.

A decade ago there were calls for lowering the age of compulsory attendance. As the Kettering Commission (Brown, 1973) put it: "By the age of fourteen, a student who has not developed some motivation toward learning is not likely to profit from compulsory schooling. Secondary education must drop its custodial burdens" (pp. 41-42). Several current reports view lack of discipline as a significant element in the educational crisis. Boyer (1983, p. 160) recommends that "every school should have a fair, clearly stated, widely understood code of conduct" which should be enforced fairly and consistently with prompt removal from classrooms of disruptive students.

Grant's report, *Education, Character and American Schools,* focuses on how different kinds of ethos or climates are created. In Grant's (1983) view, "The central problem we as a society confront with respect to education is the problem of how we reconstitute the necessary intellectual and moral authority without which schools cannot function while preserving the gains we achieved in fashioning a more equitable and just system" (p. 13).

The problems and concerns of education are integrally wrapped in equity issues and the probability that the "get tough with the offenders" approach will resolve the problems is low. Grant reminds his readers that schools are institutions "that educate the emotions, indelibly affecting both heart and intellect." New curricular requirements introduced without attending to the ethos and climate of the classroom and the school are hardly likely to bring about significant reform.

Better Teachers and Better Teaching

Most reports agree with Boyer when he speaks of teachers and teaching as "the heart of the matter." And, most of the current reports also concur with the Commission on Excellence in Education that too few academically able students enter and stay in teaching, that teacher education programs are inadequate if not useless, that the conditions of teaching are

unacceptable, and that there are serious shortages of teachers in certain subject areas. Except for a brief period which followed the publication of the Coleman Report, *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (1966), when it was questioned whether teachers and, indeed, schools make a difference, the central theme of most school reform has focused on upgrading teachers and improving the quality of teaching.

The recommendations which emerge are essentially the same remedies offered in the past without being couched in new rationales for the most part. They include: raise the standards and toughen the selection process for admission to teacher training programs; sharply reduce or even eliminate the professional/pedagogical component of teacher education so that teachers have a liberal arts education plus specialization in the discipline they are to teach; raise salaries of teachers to make them "professionally competitive, market-sensitive, and performance-based"; (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 30); lengthen the school year to provide time for curriculum and staff development; develop career ladders for teachers so that they can grow professionally without leaving the classroom; use nonschool personnel to alleviate teacher shortages in critical areas such as mathematics and science; establish merit pay systems; design more effective continuing education or in-service opportunities for teachers. Several reports focus very specifically on the conditions of teaching which are seen as problematic at best. Sizer's primary recommendation is that America restore to teachers and their students the largest share of responsibility for learning.

Boyer argues that while the entire teaching profession must be renewed, schools cannot be improved without improving the teachers already in America's classrooms. For some time to come, he notes, these teachers will continue to teach and must be viewed "as part of the solution, not the problem" (Boyer, 1983, p. 159). Other analysts believe that the greying of America's teaching staff means that a new cadre of teachers will be entering the profession in the period ahead and that they can be recruited, trained and inducted very differently from our current procedures. The current reports propose reforms which have been the focus of perennial debates—the balance between what Borrowman (1977) called the "liberal" and the "technical;" the existence of a knowledge base to guide the professional preparation of teachers; the value of merit pay in attracting better teachers; and even the place of tenure. The recommendations are hardly novel: make teaching more rewarding (better salaries) and respected; recruit more academically able persons to the profession and certify individuals with good liberal arts backgrounds for the classroom; build career ladders and differentiated staffing patterns; and make teachers more accountable.

What seems to be missing from most reports is a recognition that teachers and teaching have changed over the past two or three decades, just as American society has been changing. To cite just a few items of change: as has been pointed out by a number of writers, the women's movement has resulted in opening up a number of professions to women which were not available earlier; classroom teaching is no longer the

attractive option and, in some instances, one of the few options available. Thus, the pool of women candidates is being reduced as the professional choices for women have broadened. The growth of what is described as militancy among teachers' groups, leading to bargaining and negotiating of a wide variety of terms and conditions beyond pay issues, has changed the profession. The growth of accountability systems, competency- and performance-based education, and testing programs aimed at both students and teachers have affected the conditions of teaching. The change in family and society values has brought about significant changes in the climate and relationships of school and community. Grant (1982) asserts that "the spread of the children's rights literature through the secondary schools has been one of the great untold curriculum stories of the last decade," contributing, in his view, to "a collapse of adult authority as representing a standard for children" (p. 30). This "crisis in authority" affects the entire educational process. "Teacher burnout" is a common expression today. It is not that teachers, teaching, and the teaching profession have not been studied. Rather, with a few exceptions of which Sizer's *Horace's Compromise* is most notable, there seems to be little connection between the recognizable recommendations and the conditions of teachers and teaching in today's context.

After Sputnik, there was a sense of urgency about upgrading the teaching profession. This led to the passage of the National Defense Education Act of 1958. The resulting efforts focused on improving teaching skills and knowledge of disciplines to be taught, on the improvement of instructional materials, on using the specialists' insights and experience to help teach teachers and upgrade teaching resources. The assumption was that there was a core of teachers capable of meeting the nation's needs, particularly in such areas as mathematics and science.

The tone and recommendations of the current reports is not quite so optimistic. Already governors and chief state education officers are proposing that teacher education programs be modified and/or eliminated, that persons without professional preparation but with strong liberal arts backgrounds be brought into the classrooms and given on-the-job training; and that differential pay scales be established. The rhetoric is that a rational approach to the complete sequence of teacher recruitment, teacher education, retention, and continuing education as well as an attack on the professional working conditions of the teacher and a reappraisal of society's view of the profession—all are needed and all are integrally linked. Because such a comprehensive rethinking of teachers and teaching in today's society is complex and difficult, the proposals deal with some elements and rely on recommendations made previously although not always implemented.

Intrinsic Value of Education

What seems to be missing from many of the current reports is a meaningful discussion of the intrinsic worth of education, the pleasure of learning, the affective aspects of education which must complement the cognitive

achievement, the building of polity and community. As during the post-Sputnik era when the prime, if not sole, purpose of schools was seen as helping to meet the nation's need for specialized manpower and skilled workers, the current stress is on producing persons who will enable America to compete industrially and commercially with other nations. The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) asserted that its concern went well beyond industrial and commercial matters; it also included "the intellectual, moral, and spiritual strengths of our people which knit together the very fabric of our society" (p. 7). If its concern went beyond matters such as industry and commerce, recommendations dealing with those concerns are hard to find. Goodlad (1983) observed "the near-absence of anything designed to deliberately cultivate the values and skills of constructive social interaction and group accomplishment which we extoll as a characteristic of our people but neglect in the breach" (p. 241). Goodlad found it "difficult to be sanguine about the moral and ethical learnings accompanying many of the experiences of schooling" (p. 241). True, in listing the purposes and goals of schooling, the several reports go beyond cognitive and academic aims but the recommendations ignore attaining them.

Meg Greenfield (Howe, 1983) reminds us that there is a joy in learning which "everyone who has ever had one great teacher of a serious subject knows" about. She believes that "if we could acquire, come to honor, this great value, if we could truly aspire to become a 'learning society,' the rest—the competitive and material benefits—would follow. But we keep trying to do it the other way around" (p. 172). Greenfield worries "that the values we bring to the [reform] effort to right the situation are precisely the ones that got us into trouble in the first place and are only likely to perpetuate our grief."

In raising questions about a proper balance between cognitive and affective development; attendance to personal and social aspects of education as well as academic and intellectual; intuitive, creative and productive thinking and learning; experiencing the joy of discovering and learning—there is no intent to denigrate cognitive and academic aims but only to remind us of a concept of education which has an intrinsic worth—learning for its own sake. Such a concept is concerned not only with the subjects to be studied and the courses to be taken but with the climate for learning, the formal and informal learning opportunities, the subliminal learning.

Schools and Non-School Educative Settings

That education and socialization take place in various settings in addition to schools has long been recognized. The California Rise Commission (1975) rejected what it called the traditional view of schooling—"restricted to a piece of real estate where licensed adults teach and students passively learn during specified times of the day" and projected in its stead "a school system that takes place at many times and places in which both adults and young work as teachers and learners . . . [one] that attracts,

motivates, and satisfies young people" (p. 2). Several reports currently urge that there be a partnership created between business-industry and the schools for personnel and resources as well as financial support.

For the most part, the reports do not examine the implications of education in nonschool settings except for the mention of home computers and television. Boyer's proposal for a "new Carnegie unit" to consist of 30 hours per year for four years of voluntary service in the school or community does recognize at least indirectly the learning possibilities in the community, although its focus is on the learnings derived from service.

The one exception is the report of the National Science Board's Commission (1983) which observes: "Much that affects the quality of formal education occurs outside the classroom and beyond the control of the school—a great deal of learning takes place unintentionally and unconsciously through casual reading and experiences" (p. 59). The report suggests that the learnings of the classroom be reinforced by a wide range of activities which "lend meaning and relevance to the rigor and discipline of formal study." The Commission recommends: "Youth organizations, museums, broadcasters, and other agents of informal education should cooperate with school districts and each other to provide a rich environment for early and continued learning and motivation outside of the schools" (p. 59).

The reports of the 1970s criticized the high schools as segregated and isolated institutions, failing to capitalize on the formal and informal learning opportunities found in nonschool settings. In focusing on the classroom and the school, the reports of the 1980s seem to ignore or downplay the essential relationships between the schools and nonschool educating agencies insofar as teaching and learning are concerned.

Reforming the Schools

In summing up prospects for reform in April 1976, Passow wrote: "Although criticisms, reappraisals, and proposals for reform of America's high schools are a continuing activity, the education professions and general citizenry have never faced such a plethora of commission and panel reports as they do presently. Their number alone might be sufficient basis for immobilizing those individuals who would like to change the high schools" (. 52).

Of course, the reports of the 1980s outnumber those of the 1970s by better than two to one. The National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) noted that it was "not the first or only commission on education, and some of our findings are surely not new, but old business that now at last must be done. For no one can doubt that the United States is under challenge from many quarters" (p. 36). That Commission urges that students and parents join "faculty members and administrators, along with policy makers and the mass media" in bringing about the reform of the educational system. The *Paideia Proposal* is addressed to a wide variety of persons who are "most concerned with the future of our public schools" (Adler, 1982, p. xi) and that consists of just about everyone.

Goodlad argues strongly for the individual school as the unit for improvement and those associated with it as the persons to effect change. Boyer urges colleges, universities, and corporations to establish partnerships with schools to enrich the quality of education. The National Science Board Commission has specific roles for government agencies, private corporations and foundations, the states and other groups, part of its overall action plan to improve mathematics, science and technology by 1995. The Education Commission of the States also has specific roles for state and local boards of education, educators, business leaders, and others in its eight-point Action Plan on Education for Economic Growth.

As with other reports over the years, these reports are policy statements and, as such, should be judged and assessed in terms of criteria one would apply to policy analyses: Do the reports have the situation right? Are the analyses of schools and the problems identified correct? Are the recommendations sound on the bases of the diagnoses and analyses? Are the recommendations implementable? As with most reports of this genre, the answer concerning the current reports is "yes and no."

Despite the assertions of several of the reports, there is considerable diversity among the schools along all dimensions of schooling: ecology, climate, relationships, nature and quality of instruction, school-community interactions, and so on. There are schools which have achieved equity and excellence and there are schools which have attained neither. There are schools which are constantly engaged in a process of self-renewal while there are others which have never even started. There are schools which would have to do relatively little to implement the recommendations of one or more of the reports while others probably could not implement the recommendations even with herculean efforts. Some recommendations, such as mandating a common core curriculum, can be implemented by a single school or school system while others, such as changes in teacher education and certification, would require action at a state level. Establishing research and development centers to improve mathematics, science, and technology education would probably require joint federal and state funding. When Conant (1959) issued his report on *The American High School Today*, he made 21 recommendations which provided a checklist guide to improving America's comprehensive high schools. In the foreword to the report, Gardner called it a "down-to-earth report" aimed at individuals who are ready to roll up their sleeves and say "Precisely what can we do tomorrow morning to improve our schools?" (p. xii). Few "national reports" have ever been as focused on their target and as specific with recommendations which could be readily implemented by a single high school. Conant's prestige caused high schools to read the report and use the checklist although there is controversy as to how much actual reform took place. Few of Conant's recommendations were radical proposals and most could be implemented readily if a school decided to do so.

Peterson (1983) has argued that national commissions "do have their functions in American politics, but fact-finding, rigorous analysis, and

policy developments are usually not among them. Commissions are more appropriate for dramatizing an issue, resolving political differences, and reassuring the public that questions are being thoughtfully considered" (p. 11). In Peterson's view, national commission reports are likely to have the following characteristics:

1. The report is almost certain to exaggerate the problem it addresses.
2. The report will state only broad, general objectives.
3. The report will recommend changes that are beyond current technology and resources.
4. The report will not spell out the details of its proposed innovations.
5. The report will seldom call for institutional reorganization.
6. The report will poorly document the value of the solutions it proposes (pp. 9-10).

Peterson may be hard on the current national commissions but his observations do describe some of the current reports and the problems schools and school systems may have dealing with them.

As with the 1970 reports, the current reporst do not reflect the insights and understandings concerning the change process which have emerged over the past two or three decades. The processes whereby changes are likely to occur in schools and classrooms have been the focus of a good many studies and there is a growing body of knowledge which school reformers might use. At a minimum, the exhortation approach is not likely to produce change and the National Commission on Excellence in Education's "A Word to Parents and Students" (1983) makes for attractive reading but one can hardly be sanguine about its reversing the tide of mediocrity of a nation at risk.

However, the reforms which take place in the near future may be much greater and effected more quickly than those reforms recommended by prior reports. This possibility exists because of a combination of factors including the political climate and the national and local media which have made education and school a high priority agenda item once again. In addition, the fact that every state has committees, commissions, and panels dealing with educational reform means that policy mandates, directives, and legislation may result in implementation of many recommendations, certainly the more simplistic ones. Whether these reforms will lead to significant improvements in the quality of education in schools and classrooms of the kind really needed and wanted is, of course, another question. The "Era of Curriculum Innovation" which followed the launching of Sputnik led to considerable curriculum innovation and materials development which, in the end, did not result in the drastic changes which had been desired and anticipated.

What the current crop of proposals may do is to once again mobilize

the various groups, agencies, and institutions to action on the need for assessing their own programs and operations, using the reports as a guide to what should be studied and what reforms are needed. There are different demands made on leaders at the local, system, state, and federal levels. At each level, leadership is needed to start the study and change processes and to relate it to the other levels. Since everyone is in the act, the leadership roles are especially critical. And, the National Commission on Excellence in Education is right—all of us have a role to play in reforming our schools and our society.

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